

Department of Social Research
University of Helsinki
Helsinki

THE MEDIA IN THE CORE OF POLITICAL CONFLICT

VENEZUELA DURING THE LAST YEARS
OF HUGO CHÁVEZ'S PRESIDENCY

Virpi Salojärvi

ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

To be presented, with the permission of the Faculty of Social Sciences of
the University of Helsinki, for public examination in lecture room 5,
University main building, on 17 September 2016, at 12 noon.

Helsinki 2016

Publications of the Faculty of Social Sciences 2016:23
Media and Communication Studies

© Virpi Salojärvi

Photo: Virpi Salojärvi, 2011 © Virpi Salojärvi

Distribution and Sales: Unigrafia Bookstore [http://kirjakauppa.unigrafia.fi/
books@unigrafia.fi](http://kirjakauppa.unigrafia.fi/books@unigrafia.fi)

PL 4 (Vuorikatu 3 A) 00014 Helsingin yliopisto

ISSN 2343-273X (Print)

ISSN 2343-2748 (Online)

ISBN 978-951-51-1091-6 (Paperback)

ISBN 978-951-51-1092-3 (PDF)

Unigrafia, Helsinki, 2016

Abstract

This dissertation investigates the role of media in political conflict during President Hugo Chávez's administration (1999-2013). This conflict is understood as antagonism where the political opponent is seen as an enemy instead of a more equal adversary. In Venezuela, private media were powerful economic and political actors before Chávez's era due to clientelistic tradition. President Chávez questioned the neoliberal measures taken by previous governments and started to apply his politics of the "socialism of 21st century" in a manner that shaped his government's media policies. Several private media outlets disagreed with his drastic measures and took them as an attack. Confrontation developed between the private media and state media sectors.

This polarized situation offers an excellent case study to focus on the construction of hegemonies in a populist context, and the media's role in it because the society was penetrated by politics. Researching hegemonies should take into account differing parties of the conflict, which includes a variety of groups, even though on a macro level they are often treated as unified blocs. Thus, creating unity (the feeling of "us") becomes important in order for hegemonies to operate. A theoretical framework of hegemonies, antagonism, and populism frames examination of a variety of case studies, including newspaper content and the discourses of different media actors, with analyses of content, frame, visual rhetoric, and argumentation analysis.

Three core findings are presented. First, in Venezuela during this period there were two populist power blocs, the Chavistas and their opposition, who both tried to create (counter-)hegemonic power and appeal to the people. Second, in a situation of hegemonic battles, the media functions as constructor of unity. As a result of the media's role in unifying the groups and constructing common identities, it became especially significant in this power struggle. Third, the construction of populist signifiers, which serve the function of forming group cohesion, is a process where collective memories and values play essential roles. Ultimately, values in hegemony are not only forced from above but also rise from below as individuals adopt different values and make them personal, and in this way construct their own meanings for populist signifiers.

Tiivistelmä

Väitöskirjassa tutkitaan median roolia Venezuelan poliittisessa konfliktissa presidentti Hugo Chávezin hallinnon (1999–2013) aikana. Konflikti on määriteltä tutkimuksessa antagonismiksi, jossa poliittinen vastustaja nähdään vihollisena eikä tasavertaisena vastustajana. Yksityinen media oli tärkeä taloudellinen ja poliittinen toimija jo ennen Chávezin aikaa klientelistisen perinteen seurauksena. Chávez kyseenalaisti edeltävien hallitusten neoliberalistiset toimet ja sovelsi 21. vuosisadan sosialismiaan, joka koski myös mediapolitiikkaa. Monet yksityiset mediat tulkitsivat Chávezin uudet, radikaalit linjaukset hyökkäyksenä vapaata mediaa vastaan, mistä seurasi konflikti yksityisen mediasektorin ja hallituksen ja valtionmedian välillä.

Venezuelan kärjistynyt mediapoliittinen tilanne on otollinen kenttä hegemonioiden rakentumisen tutkimukselle populistisessa kontekstissa. Mediakentän polarisoitunut tilanne yhteiskunnassa, jossa politiikka on tunkeutunut elämän jokaiselle tasolle, tarjoaa myös mielenkiintoisen mahdollisuuden median yhteiskunnallisen roolin tarkasteluun. Väitöskirjassa keskiössä on hegemonian sisäinen rakentuminen monesta eri ryhmästä, vaikka makrotasolla hegemoniaa pidetäänkin yhtenä yhtenäisenä voimana. Tästä syystä yhtenäisyyden rakentaminen, tunne “meistä”, nousee tärkeäksi. Tutkimus lähestyy tätä teemaa teoreettisesti hegemonian, antagonismin ja populismin näkökulmista. Empiirisesti aihetta tarkastellaan tapaustutkimusten kautta, joissa keskitytään sanomalehtien sisältöihin ja eri mediatoimijoiden diskursseihin.

Tutkimuksesta nousee esille kolme keskeistä tulosta. Ensinnäkin Venezuelassa on kaksi populistista valtablokkia, chavistit ja oppositio, jotka pyrkivät luomaan (vasta)hegemonista voimaa ja saamaan “kansan” puolelleen. Toiseksi, hegemonioiden sisäisessä kamppailussa medialla on rooli yhtenäisyyttä tuottavana voimana, kollektiivisen identiteetin rakentajana, mikä nousee merkittäväksi valtakamppailussa. Kolmanneksi, populististen merkitsijöiden muodostuminen on prosessi, jossa kollektiivisella muistilla ja arvoilla on merkittävä rooli. Arvoja ei siis vain aseteta ylhäältä päin, vaan ne myös nousevat alhaalta käsin yksilöiden ja yhteisöjen omaksuessa eri arvoja ja tehden niistä henkilökohtaisia. Tällä tavoin venezuelalaiset rakentavat populististen merkitsijöiden sisältöä.

Resumen

La disertación investiga el papel de los medios de comunicación en el conflicto político durante la administración del Presidente Hugo Chávez (1999-2003). Aquí el conflicto está definido como una situación de antagonismo donde el oponente político está visto como enemigo. En Venezuela, los medios privados eran actores poderosos en el marco político y económico ya antes de la época de Chávez. El presidente Chávez cuestionó la política neoliberalista y empezó a aplicar su política del “socialismo del siglo 21”. Varios medios de comunicación discrepaban de los cambios drásticos y los percibieron como un ataque contra ellos.

Esa situación de polarización ofrece una oportunidad de estudio excelente para investigar la construcción de hegemonías en contexto populista y el papel de los medios en una sociedad compenetrada en la política. Mientras se investigan hegemonías se tomarán en cuenta los diferentes partidos del conflicto, cuyos incluyen grupos distintos aunque en el nivel macro están tratados como bloques unificados. De esta manera, creando unidad (el sentimiento de “nosotros”) se valida la operación de las hegemonías que a su vez permite su existencia. El marco teórico de hegemonías, antagonismo y populismo enmarca la examinación de varios casos, incluyendo el contenido de los medios y discursos de actores mediáticos utilizando el análisis de contenido, marco, retórica visual y argumentación.

En el estudio hay tres descubrimientos principales. Primero, en Venezuela había dos poderes populistas, los Chavistas y la oposición, que intentaron crear poder (contra)hegemónico y atraer el pueblo. Segundo, en una situación de batalla hegemónica, los medios de comunicación funcionan como constructores de la unidad. El conflicto trajo como consecuencia que los medios se desempeñaran unificando a los grupos y construyendo identidades colectivas lo que se tradujo en un crecimiento significativo de la importancia de los medios. Tercero, la construcción de significantes populistas los cuales sirven para la formación de la cohesión del grupo, es un proceso donde la memoria colectiva y los valores tienen un papel importante. En el fondo, los valores en hegemonía no están solamente esforzados desde arriba pero ellos crecen desde abajo cuando las personas adaptan valores distintos y los hacen personales. De esa manera construyen su propio sentido para los significantes populistas.

Acknowledgements

A long time ago in the seventies when Venezuela was going through its oil boom and the country was flourishing economically my parents, Raili and Kalervo Salojärvi, together with my older brother, Jarkko, decided to pack their belongings and head to this country far from Finland and without even speaking Spanish. I was not born yet but I owe my interest to and cultural knowledge of Latin America to this brave move. I grew up listening to stories of Venezuela and watching the endless slide shows of their stay. In addition to this cultural heritage from my childhood, I would like to thank them and also my brother's family and Jouko Eteläinen for all the encouraging support I have received during the years. Unfortunately my father passed away 21 years ago but his spirit is still very much present.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my supervisors. I started collaborating with Professor Emerita Ullamaija Kivikuru back in 2006 so we share a long history and have developed a supervisor-supervisee relationship that works for us. She gives me the needed freedom to make my own mistakes and learn from them but when I stray away too far from the path she guides me closer to where I wanted to go. I appreciate Dean and Professor Hannu Nieminen for all the comments he made about the theory of the research. There was a time when I did not know what to do with the theoretical framework of the research but with Hannu's questions I found the theories I needed.

I am honored to have such distinguished scholars as Professor Silvio Waisbord (George Washington University) and Professor Daniel C. Hallin (University of California) comment my thesis as external examiners. I value all their encouraging words and critical comments and I learned a lot from them, so they not only contribute to this work but also to my forthcoming research. I am also grateful that Professor Waisbord agreed to act as the Opponent in the public defense of my PhD dissertation. It is a privilege to have an opportunity to learn from such an experienced Latin American researcher.

Even though researching may sometimes be quite a lonely job it still requires a group that encourages you to explore new paths and sometimes also to "kill your darlings". Therefore, I would like to express my gratitude to all the colleagues from different fields that have pushed my work forward and commented on it. From the University of Helsinki Academy Research Fellow Juha Herkman has always had the time to read my manuscripts and other texts and give his valuable insights on theories about populism. I would also like to thank Professor Anu Kantola for giving me the opportunities to work in other projects and simultaneously learn, for example, research writing. Equally important is the opportunity the university lecturer Salli Hakala gave me to teach a course on populism and the media, which has been extremely

valuable to me not only for the experience gained but also as an opportunity to learn more about populism.

The research is multidisciplinary so I have been fortunate enough to receive support from many different fields of research. Moreover, what is the most important is that this support has not only been academic, but without peer support it is possible that I would not have finished the work yet. My special thanks go to all on the Doctoral Program of Communication Studies (CORE/VITRO) team. The possibility to participate in CORE/VITRO between 2010 and 2015 has been extremely valuable. I would like to thank all the VITRO members for the comments I have received. Special thanks goes to Coordinator Sanna Kivimäki who made it all possible and the director of VITRO, Professor Mikko Lehtonen who pushed the work forward during the VITRO seminars.

However, one of the best parts of VITRO was the unofficial program where I think we all received much needed peer support and shared the daily joys and worries of the university world. Therefore, I would like to especially thank Heli Lehtelä, Miia Rantala, Johanna Mäkelä, Krista Kiilamaa and Nanna Särkkä from our VITRO group and Irina Khaldarova from the University of Helsinki for not only collegial support but for also being good friends and sharing the joys and sorrows of life in general. Heli and Johanna also took the time from their busy schedules to comment on my work, which I greatly appreciate. Special thanks go to Nanna, who rushed to help with the visual layout of the thesis as I found out that my own technical skills were limited.

Obviously only half of the research was conducted in Finland and without my Venezuelan experience it would have not been possible. In Venezuela I owe a lot to all the people who have helped me. I especially want to thank all the interviewees who took their time and some even risked their careers by talking to me so openly. The interviews would not have been possible without all the informants who helped me to contact the right people and also gave me insight into the country's politics, economics and culture. Without you this work would have not been possible. I also would like to thank the good friends of mine Ennio Di Marcantonio, a journalist, and Raul Colmenares, an audiovisual producer, for all the conversations we have had on Venezuelan media and the political situation. Every time I was wondering about some specific issues I was able to approach them, even with simple, stupid questions, and they explained with patience their points of view. And of course we share our passion for good music!

Conducting a research lasting several years over two different continents would have not been possible without the financial aid from all the different foundations and institutions. The research grants of the Finnish Cultural Fund, Emil Aaltonen Foundation, Jenny and Antti Wihuri Foundation, Öflund's Foundation, the financial aid of the Finnish Graduate School in Development Studies (DEVESTU) and travel grants from VITRO made the research possible.

In addition to the academic support of my field I also owe my dear friends Jaana Eloranta in Denmark, Jonathan Ball in Canada, and Lisbet and Carlos Reverón in Venezuela for their comments on parts of the text, helping with practical things and also for being such good friends. Your critical comments and insightful remarks helped me to evaluate my work in a new light. Moreover, it has been valuable to notice that my work can raise interest outside of my academic field, which has been a source of motivation. Also Pilvi Telaaranta has been invaluable help to our family.

And last but not least; conducting research in Venezuela may bring life lasting consequences. I am extremely happy to have my Venezuelan family, who have supported me throughout the years. Thank you Yajaira and Antonio Narciso for the emotional support and all the little practical help, such as finding me books from other side of Caracas, which made my research easier. I deeply appreciate all the effort you made.

My partner and mi gran amor Antonio: Te amo mucho! Thank you for your patience, love and the endless conversations about Venezuela and sharing all the little things in daily life. Your effort as an informant and often even as a research assistant has made the work go smoothly. Finally, I should also thank the newcomer. Without him or her I would have ended up polishing the text for months and being nervous about the defense.

My interest in Venezuela and getting to know other cultures may have started because of my father, Voitto Kalervo, but it is definitely continuing because of another person named after him. Miro Voitto is my daily joy and without him knowing it, he has changed not only my personal life but also my professional life more than anyone. Because of him I am able to give 110 % to my work when it is time to work because I know that when it is time to enjoy other things in life he makes me forget everything else in a second with his sparkling smile. Moreover, at the age of three he has the ability to ask exactly the right questions, which is the most valuable asset for being a good researcher.

Amo a los tres!

Espoo, August 2016

Virpi Salojärvi

Contents

Abstract	3
Tiivistelmä.....	4
Resumen.....	5
Acknowledgements	6
Contents	9
Abbreviations	12
1 INTRODUCTION	14
1.1 Political, economic and societal situation in Venezuela	17
1.2 Theoretical frame and research questions	19
1.3 Structure of the thesis.....	25
2 THE LATIN AMERICAN AND VENEZUELAN CONTEXT	27
2.1 A brief introduction to Venezuelan history and politics	27
2.1.1 Era before Chávez	27
2.1.2 The Chávez era	33
2.2 The media in Venezuela.....	43
2.2.1 The rise of private media	44
2.2.2 Chávez and the media	49
3 THEORETICAL CONCEPTS.....	60
3.1 Hegemony and power	60
3.1.1 Gramscian hegemony versus domination	60
3.1.2 Values and passions	62
3.1.3 Media and power.....	64
3.1.4 Instrumentalization of the media	67
3.1.5 Professional dimension of journalists	72
3.2 The people as the core of democracy and populism	74
3.2.1 Democracy.....	75
3.2.2 Theory of populism	79
3.2.3 The people and the media.....	91
4 DATA AND METHODOLOGY	95
4.1 Newspaper data	95
4.1.1 Selection of the data.....	95
4.1.2 Content and frame analysis	97
4.1.3 Visual rhetoric analysis.....	99

4.2	Interview data	100
4.2.1	Conducting the interviews	100
4.2.2	Argumentation analysis	103
5	CONSTRUCTING POPULISM IN THE MEDIA.....	105
5.1	Constructing populist signifiers in print media texts	105
5.1.1	Case Study 1: The people	108
5.1.2	Case Study 2: The leader.....	120
5.1.3	Case Study 3: The enemy	131
5.1.4	Signifiers in the Venezuelan press.....	139
5.2	Construction of populism in newspaper images.....	143
5.2.1	Power of images	143
5.2.2	Constructing populism in Venezuelan newspaper images.....	145
5.2.3	Forming the unity	150
5.3	Concluding remarks.....	152
6	(DE)CONSTRUCTING THE POLITICAL CONFLICT AND THE MEDIA'S ROLE IN IT	155
6.1	Media actors' interviews and the role of media	155
6.1.1	Four ways to construct the political conflict	155
6.1.2	The difficult task of attaining hegemony.....	169
6.2	Different conceptions of the past	172
6.2.1	Collective memory of the era before Chávez	173
6.2.2	Collective memory during Chávez's administration	178
6.3	Concluding remarks.....	182
7	RECONSTRUCTING THE POLITICAL CONFLICT.....	185
7.1	Hegemony and counter-hegemony in a conflict situation.....	185
7.2	Democracy and populism	189
7.3	Media forming collective identities	191
8	CONCLUSIONS	197
	References	204
	Appendix 1: A street image from Caracas indicating the visibility of Chavismo.....	220
	Appendix 2: Venezuelan governmental advertisement in Últimas Noticias 22.1.2011 & 1.2.2011.....	221
	Appendix 3: Tables of content analysis	222
	Appendix 4: Frame analysis table sample	227
	Appendix 5: Questions.....	229

Appendix 6: Content analysis of the images	231
Appendix 7: Table of the pentadic categories.....	232
Appendix 8: Values of the different actors	234

Abbreviations

ABN	Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias, national news agency of Venezuela
AD	Acción democrática, political party
CANTV	La Compañía Anónima Nacional Teléfonos de Venezuela, national telecommunication company
Causa R	la Causa Radical, political party
CEP	Comisión Electoral de Primarias, Pre-election electoral commission
CONATEL	Comisión Nacional de Telecomunicaciones, National commission of telecommunications
COPEI	Comité de Organización Política Electoral Independiente, Social Christian (Christian Democratic) party
CNE	Consejo Nacional Electoral, National Electoral Council
CTV	Confederación de Trabajadores de Venezuela, Confederation of Workers of Venezuela
FANB	Fuerza Armada Nacional Bolivariana, National Bolivarian Armed Forces
FEDECAMARAS	Federación de Cámaras de Comercio y Producción, Federation of Chambers of Commerce
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPYS	Instituto Prensa y Sociedad, Institute of Press and Society
LOTEL	La ley orgánica de telecomunicaciones, the organic law of telecommunications
MAS	Movimiento al Socialismo, a democratic socialist party
MBR-200	Movimiento Bolivariano Revolucionario 200, Revolutionary Bolivarian Movement 200
MEP	Movimiento Electoral del Pueblo, a small center-left party created by a division of AD in 1967-1968

MinCI	Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Comunicación y la Información, Ministry of Communication and Information
MIR	Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria, a small leftist party
MUD	la Mesa de la Unidad Democrática, electoral coalition of the opposition
MVR	Movimiento V República, Fifth Republic Movement
PCV	Partido Comunista de Venezuela, communist party
PDVSA	Petróleos de Venezuela S.A., state-owned oil and natural gas company
PNI	Productor nacional independiente, independent national producer, based on RESORTE every audiovisual medium needs to have daily programs of independent Venezuelan producers
Podemos	Por la Democracia Social, political party
PPT	Patria para todo, Homeland for all, political party
PSUV	United Socialist Party of Venezuela, political party
RCTV	Radio Caracas Televisión
RESORTE	Ley de reponsabilidad social de radio y televisión, Law on Social Responsibility of Radio and Television
URD	Unión Republicana Democrática, political party
Vive TV	Visión Venezuela Televisión
VTV	Venezolana de Television
1BC	1-Broadcasting Caracas

1 Introduction

“Especially on the television it is almost like a boxing ring!”¹

The content of the media in Venezuela during Chávez’s administration was sometimes quite harsh; people making accusations and rebutting the attacks of the opposing side. Moreover, it was not just about the content. It was about conflicts in politics and economics, and the polarization also extended to the daily lives on the streets and in families.

When I went to Venezuela back in 2007, to do my research on Telesur, the Latin American equivalent to CNN en Español initiated by President Hugo Chávez, little did I know about the overall situation of the country and what was going to happen next. When I finally landed on the soil of Simón Bolívar things started to happen and the news about Radio Caracas Televisión (RCTV) was everywhere. RCTV was a 53-year-old private television channel that, according to the government, did not have its broadcasting license renewed as a standard procedure. However, according to the opposition, RCTV was silenced because it was criticizing the government (Salojärvi 2008). As a result, I ended up changing my topic from Telesur to researching the RCTV case. While investigating the case, I posed a question to a Venezuelan media researcher: “What is *really* going on in this country?” His answer was: “That is exactly what we are trying to figure out here as well.” That moment can be seen as the starting point of this work. I became interested in the overall situation of the political power play; the media’s role in it; how certain words and phrases, such as “freedom of expression”, ended up becoming part of a struggle to control their meaning; and the fact that there was no dialogue between the two sides (cf. Salojärvi 2008), all of which seemed quite harmful for Venezuelan society in the eyes of this Finnish researcher.

On a macro level there was a dominant conflict, which extended to media content. There were two adversaries or enemies that seemed to blame and even attack the other side for Venezuela’s problems. As mentioned in the opening quote, especially television was a special site of conflict. However, the situation on a macro level appeared to be a classic dilemma of the chicken and the egg. Things had escalated and been entangled for so long that it was difficult to find out what was really going on; despite the fact that there was already plenty of literature on Venezuelan macro level politics and/or Chávez (e.g. Brading 2013; Cannon 2009; Corales & Penfold-Becerra 2011; Ellner 2008; Hawkins 2010).

Latin American and Venezuelan political and economic development has always been closely connected to global development and especially to the moves of the United States. Moreover, the political conflict during Chávez’s presidency was influenced by global current events since, for example, the

¹ Long time journalist currently working in a government supported media

opposition forces had international ties and support, extending to the U.S. (Valencia Ramírez 2005, 80). In fact, it is impossible to study the development of Latin American media without considering the flows of capital and content, the linkages between internal and external actors, the connection between media industries and political and social forces, and the relations between national and global political actors which are related to colonialism, the U.S. influence in the region, and the influence of European models of journalism (Waisbord 2014, 24-25).

While Marxist theories have already emphasized the U.S influence in Latin America it should be noted that Latin American media as a whole never replicated the U.S. order (Waisbord 2014, 26-27) since multiculturalism, colonialism and local conflict affected the media cultures in the region (García Canclini 2005). Therefore, globalization should not be understood as a process detached from the local process of cultural (re)formation and the media's production and use (cf. García Canclini 2005; Martín-Barbero 1993). Therefore, the focus of this research is on a local level even though in the background it should be remembered that local media and cultural processes interlock with globalization (cf. Waisbord 2014, 27-28).

Regarding regional trends, local politics and the globalization of the media market had shaped the development of Latin American media before Chávez's presidency (Fox & Waisbord 2002a, ix; see chapter 2). Many major changes started during the cold war and ended with the rise of neoliberalism. In addition, technological changes on a global level all affect events within Venezuela as well. Moreover, the global winds did not stop there but continued throughout Chávez's presidency as Venezuela was experiencing the same expansion of the Internet and social media as the rest of the world.

When looking at the bigger picture, the Venezuelan situation is not so exceptional. For example, state interference in the media started on the continent already in the 1930s in Brazil, Argentina and Peru. And still during the time of the political democratization, media ownership, content and control were not part of the democratization that occurred on this continent, where clientelism plays such an important role (Fox & Waisbord 2002b, 2-10), i.e. a fluid, mutually beneficial interaction between societal actors that can take place in the media, politics and the market (Guerrero & Márquez-Ramírez 2014)². The especially distinguished Venezuelan media researcher, Antonio Pasquali, has criticized this aspect since the 1970s (personal communication with Pasquali in 2011) and the current media and political scene is still dominated by personal favors and clientelism (Fox & Waisbord 2002b, 2-10). For example, one interviewee – demonstrating how normalized corruption and clientelism are in the media sector – mentioned to me casually:

² Other definitions of clientelism include unequal economic and social status between individuals, and also the moral obligation that is connected to the exchange of goods or services (global.britannica.com).

“[I]t is complicated because you catch a positive piece of news and send it to the state and if you have good connections one of the mediums will publish it or if you pay to a person who is in charge – in a position that can decide about the news and the political part does not matter – they publish it.”³

(Interview no. 13)

Following Waisbord's (2014) view on globalization it is also essential to ask how the Venezuelan situation has influenced global and regional thinking. Chávez was known as the central character in a left-wing movement that swept across the continent. His socialism of 21st century was an umbrella term and inspiration to several Latin American countries, which also have readjusted their media policies (cf. Kitzberger 2014). Related to this, Venezuela also was a part of the populist movement that spread in the region, especially in Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador and Nicaragua (Waisbord 2014, 31). Moreover, the influence of Chávez was not limited to Latin America; he established economic and political relations with several other nations, including China, Russia and Iran. Thus, Venezuela during the era of Chávez did not function in a vacuum but very much interacted with other nations and global trends. These are important topics to acknowledge as they affect the background of this research.

Furthermore, it must be admitted that there is no “Chavismo” without Chávez, but not only that but there is no Chavismo and Chávez without certain historical events and different interpretations about their meaning (see chapters 2 & 6.2). In the 20th century Latin America was known for dictatorships and coup d'états: Chile, Argentina, El Salvador, Nicaragua and the list goes on. Yet, there is one country that was perceived as exceptional when writing the general history of most of the second half of the century: Venezuela. In 1958 the dictatorship of Pérez Jiménez was brought down and ever since the country was known as a “model democracy” because of its “stability, marginalization of the left, and avoidance of militant independent trade unions” (Ellner 2008, 2). This was very much distinct from the situation of its neighbouring countries. Of course, there were problems in Venezuela too. Especially in 1989 in the events known as Caracazo when riots against neoliberal changes were violently quashed by the state and several people died. Furthermore, in 1992 a young army officer attempted a coup d'état with his fellow army men, but it failed as did another attempt later that year. Yet, despite the occasional problems democratic elections were held every few years and the party in power changed, i.e. there were winners and losers, which fulfills one of the definitions of democracy (cf. Przeworski 1991; Schumpeter 1976).

³ “... (la situación) es complicada porque tu agarras y mandas una noticia positiva al estado y si tienes buen contacto en uno de los medios te lo ponen o si le pagas a la persona que está en el punto o en la posición, te puede colocar la noticia y no le importa el parte político y eso sale.”

In his second attempt to come to power the young army officer, later known as Comandante Hugo Chávez, chose a democratic path and was elected as the new president of Venezuela in the elections of 1998. During the following 14 years, between 1999 and 2013, Chávez became one of the most recognized Latin American leaders who many people either devoutly loved or deeply detested.

Based on Venezuela, this study discusses and critically evaluates the characteristics of democracy. There are several definitions of democracy and Venezuela fulfilled many of them during the 40-year period of the Fourth Republic (1958-1998) but obviously the quality of democracy did not satisfy all the citizens, which is why Hugo Chávez attained enormous popularity. Thus, feelings of inclusion or exclusion are one important aspect of democratic systems that may have far-reaching consequences.

The media are closely connected to the quality of democracy since they have many different roles in a democratic society. They inform citizens, deliver messages between the different actors within a society and offer an arena for debate. They also have an entertainment value. In particular, news media may be used not just to inform citizens by communicating news but also to spread new ideas, support particular groups, and promote particular behaviours (Mancini 2012, 263). In doing this, the media participate in constructing identities, and communities because they address audiences and create feelings of belonging (e.g. Alghasi 2011; Anderson 1983; Mainsah 2011). In this process, emotions play a crucial role. People care only about issues that raise feelings in them (cf. Hall 2005) and that is why they bother to follow politics, news and other programs in the first place. In constructing an identity, also memories and feelings play a role. The media construct and present these collective memories (Zelizer 1995; 2008; Zelizer & Tenenboim-Weinblatt 2014).

1.1 Political, economic and societal situation in Venezuela

To set the background, we should acknowledge some key statistics about the continent's overall development. Chávez came to power in 1999 during an era when Venezuelans were experiencing a lack of belief in political parties and the political system. Similarly, people in many other countries in the region, e.g. Chile, Nicaragua and Paraguay, were losing their confidence in political parties. However, Chávez's government and his party were able to revive confidence in Venezuela among their supporters. (Arnold & Samuels 2011, 40.)

During the first years of Chávez's administration Latin America as a whole was still recovering from the aftermath of the economic crisis of the 1980s and the 1990s. In 2002, which was a peak year, 44 percent of the population in the region lived in poverty and 19 percent in extreme poverty. After that the situation seemed to improve somewhat; in 2013 the percentage had fallen

to 28 percent living in poverty, and 12 percent in extreme poverty. Despite the encouraging development on a regional level, the situation on a national level differed. By the end of Chávez's administration, Venezuela was an example of this anomaly within a positive regional development as the country's poverty rates first increased from 40 percent in 1990, to 49 percent in 1999 (the year when Chávez started his first presidential term). After an initial decrease in the number of people in poverty, the statistics indicate another increase during the final years of Chávez's administration⁴. (ECLAC 2004, 16, 55, 74; ECLAC 2014, 15-23.) Yet, there were some societal advances during Chávez's term since, for example, almost every Venezuelan was able to read⁵ (www.cia.gov; www.unicef.org). Hence, there was some positive and negative development during Chávez's administration.

However, when it comes to the media, many national and international organizations expressed their worry regarding negative developments in the freedom of expression in the country because violations of the freedom of expression were frequently reported. In 2012 *Espacio Publico*, a national freedom of expression nongovernmental organization (NGO), reported 248 violations (espaciopublico.org.) and *Instituto Prensa y Sociedad* (IPYS) had 201 violations registered (ipysvenezuela.org). The violations range from censorship and intimidation to aggression. Both international organizations, Freedom House and Reporters without Borders, have lowered Venezuela's position in their freedom of expression ranking during the 2000s, so much so that in 2012 Venezuela was rated as only "partly free" by Freedom House (freedomhouse.org) and ranked 117 out of 179 countries in the press freedom index of Reporters without Borders (en.rsf.org.). Compared to the statistics of previous years, these indicate that the freedom of expression situation in the country worsened during Chávez's era but the question is what was *really* going on behind these numbers.

In the context of Venezuela, its society, including the media, became polarized, which made the situation even more extreme. Populist politics, more specifically leftist populism, took advantage of this polarization and therefore, it should be examined how populism and leftist thinking affected to the situation of the media with regard to media usage, the media system and its content. In the Venezuelan context many research projects have focused on populism and/or Chávez (e.g. Brading 2013; Cannon 2009; Hawkins 2010; Samet 2013). As there are many kinds of populisms, there are also many theoretical approaches to populism. It may be difficult to define populism or evaluate how populist a party is but using Ernesto Laclau's (2005a; 2005b) theory of populism it is possible to recognize populist traits in politics in general (see chapter 3.2). In the previous literature there have been two main

⁴ The previous numbers are not comparable with the numbers presented in 2012 and after, but poverty had diminished to 25 % of the population in 2012, but started to increase again in 2013 to 32 %: the year Chávez passed away (ECLAC 2014, 15-23).

⁵ Youth (15-24) literacy rate for males in 2008-2012 was 98 % and for females 99 % (www.unicef.org), total population above 15 years in 2015 was 96 % (www.cia.gov).

lines of thought that explain the situation in Latin America either using leftist theory (Kitzberger 2012) or theories of populism (Waisbord 2011; 2013). However, Stanley (2008) sees populism as a “thin ideology” that brings an anti-elitist essence to an accompanying ideology. Thus, this study includes the two lines of thinking – populism and leftism – and in doing so explains the political situation more thoroughly.

The Latin American media and political system cannot be compared to West-European media systems (cf. Hallin & Mancini 2004) since there are some important elements in Latin America that should not be disregarded. One, and possibly the most important as suggested by Guerrero & Márquez-Ramírez (2014; see also Hallin & Papathanassopoulos 2002), is clientelism, which they claim is an essential part of Latin American culture. However, as I approach it in this research, it could also be thought of as a mode of Latin American political culture, i.e. a way to organize power⁶.

1.2 Theoretical frame and research questions

As this case study is about the political conflict in Venezuela and how the media is involved in it, it led me to theoretical thinking about Gramscian hegemony entangled with Chantal Mouffe’s (2000; 2005a; 2005b; 2005c; 2013) antagonism and political passions as well as Ernesto Laclau’s (2005a; 2005b) theory of populism (see chapter 3). When conducting the research, I familiarized myself with different conceptions of power. However, since I did not find a suitable overall theory for the purposes of the research I constructed the theoretical framework from the needs of the data. That is also why the theory is constructed from many different sources but combined into a coherent analysis.

In politics there is always positioning between “us” and “them” as Chantal Mouffe (2000) remarks. She emphasizes the point that the level of democracy can be defined by how these “others” are treated (Mouffe 2000). Also these political power plays generate forms of collective identification that may raise political passions. If these political passions cannot be channelled into political action they may be formed into undisputed moral values. (Mouffe 2005b.)

In populist politics the divide between them and us is highlighted. Populism can be seen also as raising a counter-hegemony against the prevailing hegemony. (Laclau 2005a.) Hegemony in a Gramscian sense, however, includes different aspects of a society, such as economics, culture and politics. Thus, there is a big difference between hegemony and domination as hegemony is something that penetrates society and domination is something that is forced from above. (cf. Cañizález 2014.)

⁶ This remark was made by Waisbord during the Media and Governance in Latin America Conference at the University of Sheffield in 2015.

During President Chávez's era, according to many (cf. Brading 2013; Ellner 2008; Hawkins 2010), populism prevailed in Venezuela, which further emphasized the gap between the elite and the people. However, it should be noted that the mass media were involved in the conflict, and that is also why they should be researched from the point of view of politics and populism because the media include the 'us versus them' divide when it comes to the audiences (cf. Sonwalkar 2005). On a macro level the two parties involved in the Venezuelan conflict were either sympathizers of President Chávez, or the cross-party opposition that was formed by several different political movements which were united in a common goal to defeat him. The conflict situation was reflected in the content and ownership of the media.

The political conflict during the era of President Hugo Chávez was, and still is today, during the era of President Nicolas Maduro, complex. As Bisbal (2009a, 16) points out what happened in Venezuela during Chávez's era was that politics penetrated all the sectors of life, including normal street life (see appendix 1). Therefore, communication and culture were also penetrated by politics and the political (Bisbal 2009a, 16). This makes Venezuela ideal for focusing on the media's role in populism as it is easier to detect and study the patterns because it can be concentrated on from the time the political situation in Venezuela escalated. Obviously, my aim in the research is not to tackle everything. The main difficulty of the research was analyzing the specific isolated cases and balancing that by being able to say something about the overall situation.

I chose to approach the situation from two different perspectives. First, I was interested in media content since the media should be the organism that mediates information between politicians and citizens. But it also offers an arena for public discussion and debate and therefore is part of the creation of the collective identities in a state. Second, I was interested in the point of view of different media actors that do not solely use official rhetoric. That is also why this research is different from some other studies on Venezuelan media (e.g. Samet 2013; Tanner Hawkins 2003) as I do not solely focus on journalists or media staff. In fact, in addition to them, the research includes several different persons who all might be termed as media actors since they are interested and involved in the media in one way or another but who do not necessarily earn their living from media outlets.

For the purposes of this research, Venezuelan society has been divided between different actors by using Galtung's (1999) model but replacing capital with the market following Nordenstreng (2009). Therefore, the actors in a society are the state and related governmental institutions; the market and related property and commercial phenomena; and civil society, which includes persons and organizations that are not included in the other two. Each of these actor groups has its own logic regarding how it functions, i.e. different interests and values. According to Galtung (1999), the media are placed in the middle of these actors (Figure 1) and they move between the points of the triangle. In theory, the media are the instrument that should enable

communication between the three points. However, as Galtung (1999) states, a cause of many problems in any society is a lack of communication between the actors since the media tend to be closer to one of the three points in real life, depending on the societal and economic system.

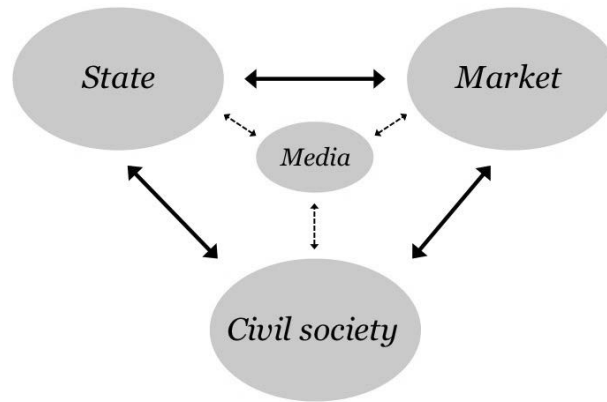


Figure 1. Galtung's model of media and society

However, I have modified Galtung's model slightly since I am interested in the role of the media. The media have always been connected to politics (Mancini 2012, 263). In this model the media are understood in all their diversity, and depending on the context and historical era, different mediums and forms of communication are included in it. Thus, as technology has advanced, the media sector has also progressed and broadened. Nevertheless, mainly for historical, political and economic reasons as well as the everyday customs of the people, the focus in this research is mostly on the "old" media, i.e. television, radio and print media. That is because even today the "old" media is where power and money is largely concentrated and circulates, including the websites of the established media outlets. Thus, they still have significant economic power and because throughout the history these media have had political connections with power holders (see chapter 2.2), they also have political power.

Therefore, I have divided the media into different actors, i.e. state media⁷ and private media (Figure 2). There is also a third media actor, alternative and community media (Atton 2002), whose role was also studied since it was especially important in Venezuela where Chávez was trying to democratize the media from below so that media organizations other than the main-

⁷ In another context this would be called public media but in this research I use the term state media because of the financial and political connections between the state and the public media outlets (see chapters 2 & 6).

stream media would be able to function and ordinary citizens would be able to participate in it.

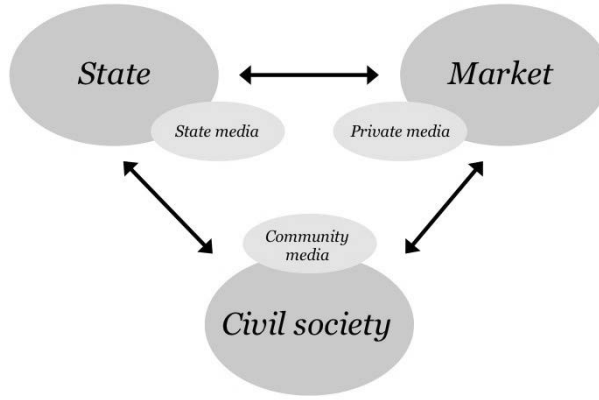


Figure 2. Media's relation to different societal actors.

Nevertheless, Galtung's original model may be criticized for focusing on the different actors and disregarding the interaction between them. In this study I am also interested in the interaction since the focus is on the conflict. Therefore, different modes of interaction need to be studied in order to look at the power relations between the actors.

Conflict is a key theme in this study and in order to make sense of it, it is defined by Mouffe's term of antagonism as opposed to agonism. Antagonism is a situation where the opponents consider each other enemies, not adversaries, which leads to a situation of not having common rules of play and a lack of respect (Mouffe 2000; 2013; see chapter 3). Thus, when the conflict is understood in these terms, the principal research question of the study is:

RQ: What is the role of media in antagonism?

In order to answer to the main research question, I look at the situation of Venezuela following Voltmer's (2013, 49) idea that "the meaning, practice and perception of an independent and diverse press cannot be judged without taking into account the particular social and political context in which public communication takes place". Thus, a strong case study is needed in order to answer to the question. I answer the principal research question by looking at the case study of Venezuela and answering two sets of subquestions:

Sub RQ 1: What different representations of power are there in Venezuelan newspapers? How are they constructed, legitimated and challenged by different power holders?

Sub RQ 2: *What discourses of political struggle are there among media actors in Venezuela? How do media actors construct their respective “common reality”?*

The principal data consists of newspaper articles and interviews. In addition to this, an ethnographic approach is used in the background. The study reveals that the media affect a person's political orientation more than age, education, gender, ideological predispositions and socio-economic position. Even 25 percent of the variance in political orientation may be due to news media exposure. (Schmitt-Beck & Voltmer 2007.) However, the question of what type of media remains crucial. The media have a positive affect on democratic citizenship. However, it is particularly information-rich media – above all print media rather than television – that have the strongest effect (Voltmer 2013, 111). Even though television may be considered the main medium in Latin America,⁸ especially in Venezuela, the circulation rates of newspapers are relatively high compared to other countries in the region⁹ (Boas 2013). This is also one of the reasons why I focus on print media content. Four different newspapers are included in the data. Two of them – *Últimas Noticias* and *El Universal* – are national and they are among the three newspapers that have the largest circulation in the country. The other two – *Tal Cual* and *Correo del Orinoco* – have a smaller readership but are still national. The newspapers represent different editorial lines due to their background. The first three are private newspapers. *Correo del Orinoco* is a newspaper founded by the government. (See chapter 4.)

The data includes a total of 817 articles that were gathered between 2010 and 2012. The articles are analyzed using simple quantitative analysis and qualitative methods, i.e. content analysis, frame analysis, and visual rhetoric analysis. The focus is on how three important conceptions of populism (see chapter 3.2) – the people, leader and enemy – are constructed in the media and how different power holders have been able to spread different discourses. Even though the main arena of the so-called media war was television, newspapers were chosen for the focus of this research since the audio-visual media was subject to many laws, sanctions and restrictions during the last years of Chávez's era (see chapter 2.2) but print media was able to function in a fairly free manner and in this way it was possible to study actual editorial and journalistic practices. Moreover, there was a practical reason for selecting newspaper data since access to Venezuelan television content from Finland is extremely limited. The analysis of the newspaper content reveals the struggle regarding the dominant discourse between the power holders in society and how the media is involved in that discursive struggle (chapter 5).

In the media actors' interviews, the different media actors shown in Figure 2 were the main focus. A total of 34 interviews were conducted in Cara-

⁸ More than 95 % of the households in the region have television. In Venezuela the number is even higher, 98 %. (Boas 2013.)

⁹ Circulation rate in Venezuela in 2010 was 10,5 % (Boas 2013).

cas, Venezuela during three separate field trips between 2011-2012. Different media actors were interviewed, such as state, private and community media, but also NGOs, academics, politicians and citizen activists. The interviews are analyzed with the aid of argumentation analyses. The focus is on how different actors have constructed the situation and which elements of collective memory are used to justify their views. The interviews give background and depth to the analysis of the media content by bringing in the voice of several different media actors. By analyzing the interviews, it is possible to understand the conflict better. Even though there are just two different dominant voices on the macro level, the research reveals that there are four different ways to perceive the situation underneath the macro level. The media content does not tell the whole picture. Also, even if on the macro level the dominant power blocs are trying to give a certain image of the events and their part in them, the interviews remind us that there are actually also other actors in the field, such as citizens, and that they have learned to play the game. (See chapter 6.1.) The interviews also give a perspective on the situation by deepening the analysis into the past and collective memory, which has shaped the ideas and views of the participants (see chapter 6.2).

Ethnography is used as an additional data in the background to give depth to the analysis; ethnographic notes often help to describe, and structure the reality in the country, and therefore they should not be disregarded. Only by experiencing Venezuelan society through ethnographic research was the researcher able to understand the penetrating effect that politics has in that society. The ethnographic perspective also provides valuable information about the content and the use of media in daily life.

In addition to the research questions introduced above, the study also looks at the themes of different aspects of democracy: how does populism affect society and spread through it? What are the different signifiers in Venezuela's media society and how they are constructed and spread? What kind of power does the media have and how do they use it? From the point of view of development studies, analyzing Venezuela under President Chávez's presidency also answers to many questions about the viability of the policies and movements that aim to challenge the North's hegemony and transform the existing system. In the so-called Third World countries there have been several ways to achieve counterpower either from "above," so that the state and political parties gain power; or from "below," so that social organizations and other grassroots level movements can seek empowerment and change (Ellner 2008, 175). In Venezuela, both strategies have been in use.

The research can be described as multidisciplinary since a complex situation requires a multi-level approach. In this I have taken advantage of my background in Media and Communication Studies, Latin American Studies, and Development Studies. Political Science and Social Psychology have also been sources of inspiration.

The ambitious aim of the study is to deconstruct the Venezuelan situation, and to understand and make sense of it. This ought to help scholars studying

other political conflicts develop their perspectives; evaluate the common grounds people share and the issues that separate them. Even though the case study focuses on Venezuela, it is related to other issues as well. On the one hand, Chávez started to apply his revolutionary politics of the socialism of 21st century, but he also was a part of a chain of events in Latin America. He gained many allies such as the Castros in Cuba, Evo Morales in Bolivia, Rafael Correa in Ecuador, and the Kirchners in Argentina, who have all applied their own media policies. Also it is impossible to say anything about “Chavismo” as a movement after Chávez’s death without understanding the creation and formation of Chavismo during his era. All this of course, is a part of a bigger picture, which involves the hegemonic domination of the United States in the region, the (end of) cold war (cf. Castañeda 2006), the rise of neoliberalism (cf. Cleary 2006) and globalization (cf. Stokes 2009) that generated the leftist response. In Europe, on the other hand, there has been a wave of neo-populist parties related to some of those events because populism is a common denominator and this study will add to research about populism as a discourse. Using Laclau’s theory (2005a; 2005b) of populism, the people that used to be on the margins of a society are raised to the center stage of politics. Thus, we come again to the question I posed earlier about the characteristics of democracy and the feelings of inclusion and exclusion.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

This research consists of different pieces of information and narratives, which are little by little put together. Therefore, it is possible to read separate chapters but in order to understand it well, it should be read through in order from the beginning to the end. Since I value the interviewees who managed to arrange their schedules for the interviews and some even risked their jobs by stating their opinions, it was important that their voice was heard throughout the book. That is why the information gained from the interviews is used as background information and to describe some of the events outside chapter 6, which is where the focus on the analysis of the interviews is to be found¹⁰.

Chapter 2 introduces Venezuela’s political background and the media context. This chapter is specifically important for the readers who are not familiar with the Venezuelan context because the background is essential in order to understand how the antagonistic conflict of Chávez’s Venezuela was formed in the country’s history. Some of the aspects discussed here are Latin America’s political past, leftism, and neoliberalism, which are all connected to the media and its clientelistic role.

¹⁰ In order to protect the identities of some of the interviewees the numbers of the interviewees have been changed in each chapter.

After setting the scene the main concepts connected to the antagonistic conflict – hegemony, power, democracy and populism – are discussed in chapter 3. Power, hegemony, and ideology offer a broad framework for the whole research and Gramsci's point of view on hegemony is central. Some theories of power and media are also discussed. After this we examine the concept of the people approaching it from the perspective of democracy and populism. Since democracy is a broad and complex concept it is focused on from the point of view of Venezuela, its history and the media. Finally, after setting the foundations of the discussion, we talk about populism. Especially Laclau's (2005a; 2005b) theory of populism is central since it makes it possible to make sense of the overall situation in Venezuela. Furthermore, populism, together with leftist theories, explains some of the characteristics of Venezuelan media policies.

In chapter 4 on the data and methodology the actual cases and the conducting of the research are introduced. The main methodology has a dramatist approach since it consists of Goffman's (1974) and Burke's (1946) theories. In addition to these: content analysis, visual rhetoric analysis and ethnography are used.

In chapter 5 the question of how the different representations of power that are present in an antagonistic conflict are constructed, legitimated and challenged is examined through the case study of the Venezuelan press.

Chapter 6 moves on to the question of how different media actors construct the antagonistic conflict. Based on the analysis of the argumentation, four categories are formed in order to describe the events. They all differ in their opinion, but all the interviewees construct the situation on three different levels; the core of all the societal actors in Figure 2 is their values because from these values action arises, which results in consequences. The formation of value is then looked at from the point of view of collective memory.

In chapter 7 the implications of the results are discussed, focusing on the questions of how antagonism is constructed, the issue of antagonism versus agonism in democracy and the role of the media in antagonism. In chapter 8 all the threads are woven together and the patterns are made clear.

2 The Latin American and Venezuelan context

In order to approach the antagonist situation of Venezuela it is important to acknowledge how the situation developed. This is also useful background information for readers who are not so familiar with Venezuela's history and context. Moreover, every region has its own distinct features and therefore the media sector and its development as a participant in the antagonism should also be looked at.

2.1 A brief introduction to Venezuelan history and politics

I start examining Venezuelan antagonism by looking for some key factors from the country's history¹¹. However, the task is not so simple. As Ellner (2008, 14) points out many history writers as well as common Venezuelans are influenced by certain perspectives, and this skews many historical narratives¹². There are three dominant perspectives in the hegemonic historical narrative of Venezuela, which are: 1) since 1936 Venezuelans have not had much class conflict nor tensions, and have also avoided ongoing political confrontations: 2) political conflicts in Venezuela have focused on power while issues of substance have not been significant: and 3) confrontations in Venezuela during the second half of the 20th century are few and far between because of the "conflict-management capability of strong institutions and the moderation of leaders" (Ellner 2008, 14). In the dominant discourse, Venezuela was known as a model democracy after 1958, and therefore many of the aspects of Venezuelan society have not been openly discussed or at least they were not before Chávez's era. Chávez condemned Venezuela's pacted democracy from 1958-1998 (Ellner 2008, 6), questioning the common reading of the country's history (see appendix 2). Hence, a brief history of Venezuela is our starting point.

2.1.1 ERA BEFORE CHÁVEZ

Even though the main focus of the research is on Chávez's era there are some aspects from previous eras that work as explanatory factors for his popularity and as background information for the current opposition.

¹¹ This chapter is largely based on Ellner's (2008) text but also other sources such as Lander (2005) are used.

¹² Here we should acknowledge that history is always a construction of certain power holders (cf. Foucault 1998; 2006).

Colonial era and dictatorships

Revolutionary leader Simón Bolívar (1783-1830) led the war of independence against Spain¹³. Bolívar's dream of a sort of the United States of South America was never fulfilled but he has always been an important part of South American history and culture. Despite his failed dream, he is commonly celebrated as a liberator and a national hero of Venezuelans, and even today pretty much every Venezuelan village, town or city has a Simón Bolívar square and his statue on it. This "cult of Bolívar" has been maintained by traditional writers who have glorified his persona and actions (Ellner 2008, 29).

Simón Bolívar was supported by many Venezuelans because many of his actions favored the non-white population¹⁴ who formed the majority of the colony's population. Bolívar for example wanted to abolish slavery¹⁵. Consequently, the issue of ethnicity and racism needs to be included in the study since Chávez often appealed to racial pride, and there were some racist elements in the dispute between the opposition and the Chavistas (Ellner 2008, 6-7; Herrera Salas 2007, 112-113). Ellner (2008, 19) remarks that Venezuelan history should also be examined from the point of view of racial tensions since conflicts between whites and people of color have existed throughout the history of Venezuela, even though Venezuelan history has traditionally not been told through the lens of race. However, this fact became even more important since Chávez emphasized different aspects and characteristics of Venezuelan history than traditional history. This has also influenced the creation of social organizations that represent different marginalized parts of society, such as indigenous people, blacks and also women. (Ellner 2008, 20.)

The era after Simón Bolívar until the year 1958 was a time of changing dictatorships and coups d'états but there were also some democratic periods. There are many different interpretations of this period of time since Chávez¹⁶ attempted to put some past leaders on a pedestal in order to strengthen nationalism (Ellner 2008, 33).

One of the most important and longstanding points in the history of Venezuela was the moment when oil was found in Venezuela in the early 1910s. In the 1920s petroleum exports exceeded the exportation of coffee and cacao, greatly affecting the nation's social structure. As oil production and oil revenue increased in urban areas it benefitted the new middle sectors of society and the industrial working class. (Ellner 2008, 34.) The wealthy nation also

¹³ Venezuela was originally declared independent in 1811 by Francisco Miranda. It was followed by a several years of battles until the state of Gran Colombia was formed by several Latin American countries in 1821. Gran Colombia did not however last for long, only until 1831.

¹⁴ The non-white population of the country was formed by blacks, Indians and pardos (multiracial Venezuelans).

¹⁵ Slavery was finally abolished in 1854.

¹⁶ Chávez was allegedly a descendent of a guerrilla chief that fought together with Ezequiel Zamora against the landed oligarchy in the 1840s, and a descent of a famous general "Maisanta" who rebelled against a dictatorship in 1914 (Gott 2005, 27).

attracted immigrants from several different countries that contributed even more to the ethnic diversity of Venezuela. Crude oil was nationalized in Venezuela in 1975 and Arenas (2010) argues that oil has been especially significant for the political leadership of the country. Even though the oil income started the democratic process in the 1970s, it also turned into a democratic crisis. From this crisis rose Hugo Chávez, who has, according to Arenas, affected the quality of democracy in Venezuela by funding his populist projects, such as the Barrio Adentro, with oil income. (Arenas 2010.) Starting from 2003, the oil money was redirected to social programs called missions of which Barrio Adentro is a good example. In addition to the missions the money was used for a new “Bolivarian” university for the poor and to start a new television channel called Vive TV. (Gott 2005, 256.)

Development of political parties and the pacted democracy

The democratic period of Venezuela is often stated as beginning from 1958. Before that era there was the military dictatorship of Marcos Pérez Jiménez (1948-1958). According to Ellner (2008, 46) it was a typical dictatorship in Latin America since it allied with Washington in the ongoing cold war. Yet, the regime of Pérez Jiménez is important in Venezuela for a few reasons. First, during his regime the state strengthened the media sector by purchasing an English owned telecommunication company CANTV¹⁷, and creating the first television channel TVN 5 (Interviews no. 12 & no. 26). Second, the long repressive military dictatorship caused the unification of the four opposition parties, *Acción Democrática* (AD), *Comité de Organización Política Electoral Independiente* (COPEI), *Unión Republicana Democrática* (URD), and *Partido Comunista de Venezuela* (PCV). Different actors such as church leaders, many professional organizations, leading businessmen, and the US State Department also supported the opposition parties. (Ellner 2008, 48.)

There are different versions of the events of January 1958 but nevertheless Pérez Jiménez fled the country after popular resistance, a general strike and the actions of the military. As the opposition was already united it started to negotiate about future democracy and Venezuela’s “model democracy” was born. Opposition parties that supported moderate politics mutually agreed that it was more beneficial to transition to democracy, than to continue with an authoritative regime (Foweraker & al. 2003, 38–39). However, future governments committed many of the same abuses as the regime of Pérez Jiménez, including violations of human rights and corruption. For example, many history texts disregard the electoral fraud and the state repression of some “political and labor activists who were outside of the political system” (Ellner 2008, 2-3).

The era of 1958-1998 is known as the era of the Fourth Republic or pacted democracy. This “pacted democracy”, which is also known as the Pact of

¹⁷ La Compañía Anónima Nacional Teléfonos de Venezuela

Punto Fijo, was agreed between three parties AD, COPEI, and URD. The Pact of Punto Fijo left out the Communist Party PCV but included the top leaders of the church, the business organization FEDECAMARAS¹⁸ and the military, who were heard in the decisions concerning their institutions (Ellner 2008, 59; Martín 2013, 13-17). It was considered a model for the rest of South America since – unlike in Colombia where there also was a pacted democracy – Venezuela overcame the guerrilla violence and the system was open to small parties (Ellner 2008, 53-54).

Even though the roots of *Acción Democrática* (AD) go all the way to 1928 it was officially founded in 1941 (acciondemocratica.org.ve). It was originally a left leaning party (Ellner 2008). The second party of the pact of Punto Fijo, *Comité de Organización Política Electoral Independiente* (COPEI), was founded as an alternative to socialism in 1946 and in 1948 it was defined as a social Christian party (www.partidocopei.com). The third party, *Unión Republicana Democrática* (URD), was a center-leftist party founded in 1945.

Admiral Wolfgang Larrazábal was chosen to be president in 1958 but his term remained short since AD's Romulo Betancourt beat him in the presidential elections in the following year. Romulo Betancourt, one of the founders of AD, was strongly supported by Washington. He took a hard line against communists since the Castros were leading their revolution in Cuba at the same time. This also moved AD closer to the centrist COPEI and caused the left-leaning URD to leave the coalition government. (Ellner 2008, 51, 56, 62.)

From Caracazo to the rise of Chávez

Many of the events of the late 1980s and 1990s explain the rise of Chávez's popularity and populist politics (cf. Panizza's (2005) four conditions in which populism is more likely to prevail; chapter 3.2.2). That is also why it is essential to go through some of the events before going to the theory of populism.

The 1970s was a decade of oil boom, increasing income from oil rent and a period of economic prosperity for the majority of the Venezuelan population. The decade of the 1980s was one of sharp economic decline. The reversal of fortune was drastic since, especially during the period of the expansion of petroleum rent (1973-1978), several different social indicators¹⁹ had improved and access to education had enabled social mobility (Lander 2005, 25). In 1983, the international economic crisis reached Venezuela and falling oil prices and the fleeing of capital from the country caused the government to devalue the bolivar and apply exchange controls. As a result, many of the government programs were put on hold and government loans were renegotiated. Simultaneously, corruption and mismanagement worsened. Viola-

¹⁸ Federation of Chambers of Commerce

¹⁹ Including education levels, health standards, life expectancy, access to housing and public services, infant mortality and employment.

tions of human rights and electoral fraud became entrenched parts of Venezuelan democracy, especially so in the 1990s; while clientelism and corruption started to take their toll on the state sector of the country's economy. (Ellner 2008, 56, 82, 85.)

Even though Venezuelan voters did reject neoliberalist presidential candidates, unlike in Peru and Argentina, neoliberalist policies were eventually adapted in Venezuela. Carlos Andres Pérez (1989-1993) was connected to the state interventionist policies, which he applied during his first term in the 1970s, and Rafael Caldera (1994-1999) ran his campaign on an anti-neoliberal basis. Despite the electoral campaigns of Pérez and Caldera, they eventually applied neoliberal policies after they had won. During Pérez's second term there was also an electoral reform that changed the format so that governors were directly elected in order to strengthen the connection between the local communities and the candidates. This weakened the parties since the candidates own qualities became more important. (Ellner 2008, 85-94.) This together with the actions of influential daily newspapers taking a political stance against some political leaders is considered responsible for causing the political crisis that led to Chávez's victory (Lander 2005, 28) – Hugo Chávez was the only anti-neoliberal candidate in the elections of 1998.

On February 27th 1989 people started to mobilize against the increase in public transportation fares that were caused by gasoline price increase, this escalated into mass looting that spread all over the country. The looting was violently repressed by the military going into the barrios²⁰ and hundreds, maybe thousands, died²¹. Caracazo is something that has marked Venezuelan history, especially in the barrios of the major cities, ever since it happened. It also represented a break between the past and marked the beginning of the delegitimization of the political system. Even though its name refers to Caracas, it did not occur only in the capital but in all of the country's urban areas. During his term Chávez raised the events of Caracazo to the fore and organized commemorative activities around them (see appendix 2). (Ellner 2008, 91-99.)

Caracazo also affected the military coups of 1992 since Chávez's clandestine military group *Revolutionary Bolivarian Movement-200* (MBR-200) that was formed in 1982, was repulsed by the government's decision to use excessive force on the looters in February 1989. Doubtlessly, this was one reason for them acting on February 4, 1992 when MBR-200 took over strategic points in Caracas, Maracaibo and Maracay²². (Ellner 2008, 96.) However, their coup attempt was not successful and Chávez called on the group to surrender. This brief 73-second call to surrender was televised and during it Chávez stated that for the moment they have failed. This phrase "for the

²⁰ Barrio is a Venezuelan low-income urban area.

²¹ Officially there were 277 killed and 1009 wounded but according to other estimates there were even more than 2000 deaths (Ellner 2008, 95).

²² The president of the parliament (2012-2016), Diosdado Cabello also took part in the February coup.

moment” (por ahora) became a slogan that the most Venezuelans took as a sign of hope that Chávez would return in the future. Also the red beret of the parachute regiment became Chávez’s trademark during the short message. (Bisbal 2009a, 16; Gott 2005, 23.) After the coup attempt, Chávez was sentenced to prison but was set free already in 1994 under Caldera’s presidency²³. In 1992 there was also another coup attempt in November lead by Chávez’s followers.

In 1993 one of the COPEI’s founders, Rafael Caldera announced his candidacy outside of the party and in doing so accepted the support of the groups that used to oppose him such as leftist and extreme leftist movements²⁴ (www.partidocopei.com; Ellner 2008, 91). According to COPEI (www.partidocopei.com) this caused a political, social and economic crisis that was also converted into the disbelief of the political parties that had not changed their structures. Caldera won the elections and stepped in the office in 1994, and was the only president in Latin America that had an openly anti-neoliberal stance before Chávez’s era. However, a banking crisis arose and Caldera’s anti-neoliberal tools were limited. Thus, in 1996 Caldera had to adopt orthodox economic policies called the “Venezuela Agenda” that helped to get an agreement (including a USD 1,4 billion loan) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Economic changes included privatizations and the modification of the social security system. Health and retirement systems were privatized which gave plenty of opportunities to foreign-owned financial institutions. (Ellner 2008, 99-102.)

The presidential elections of 1998 can be seen from the point of view of being both anti-neoliberalism and anti political party system. The two candidates that gained the most votes, the governor of Carabobo since 1989 Henrique Salas Römer (40 % of the votes) and a middle-level officer that attempted a coup Hugo Chávez (56 % of the votes) were both outsiders to the established parties. Römer, however, was pro-neoliberalist and Chávez aimed for state intervention in the economy, gaining back state control of oil and other industries and a negotiated moratorium on foreign debt. (Ellner 2008, 104-105.) However, it should be noted that because Chávez was an outsider it also meant that he did not have a lot of political experience in handling public issues (Bisbal 2009a, 17).

Even though it is often stated that the 1990s was an era of neoliberal hegemony, Ellner (2008, 108) points out that in the case of Venezuela there was no full absorbed hegemony due to events such as Caracazo, the two coup d’états in 1992 and the presidential elections of 1998, when two candidates from beyond the established party system proved that neoliberalism had not fully penetrated political debate and the prevailing system in the country.

²³ The current president of Venezuela Nicolas Maduro worked as an activist to get Chávez out of the prison.

²⁴ i.e. Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS), Movimiento Electoral del Pueblo (MEP) and Partido Comunista de Venezuela (PCV).

The failure of reformers in the 1980s and 1990s to respond to popular demand and to meet the expectations of the majority of the public resulted in a lack of confidence in the political parties, which set the stage for Chávez. Also, the structural economic changes in the name of neoliberalism caused an expansion of the informal economy, organized labor lost its power and deregulation caused an increase in the cost of living. Due to the economically and socially prosperous decade of the 1970s, Venezuelans had a deep-rooted self-image of an inclusive, egalitarian, and racially democratic society. However, the contrast with the seventies had become more drastic by 1997 as per capita income was 8 percent less than in 1970. Furthermore, the total poverty almost doubled between 1984 and 1991 according to some estimates. The societal consequences were increases in violence and social division as poverty and exclusion became permanent phenomena that could not be overcome by an individual's own effort. (Lander 2005, 26-27.)

2.1.2 THE CHÁVEZ ERA

Since the main focus of the research is on the last years of Chávez's presidency the development from the early years of his term should be acknowledged as well, including the structure of his party PSUV and Venezuela's leftist politics. This emphasizes the movement and change within a developing hegemony that is discussed on a theoretical level in chapter 3.1.

Chávez and his political career

Chávez was born in 1954 in the state of Barinas to two schoolteachers who were both politically active. He entered military academy in Caracas in 1971 at the age of 17. (Gott 2005, 26, 35.) When he won the presidential elections of 1998 he was already a well-known character in Venezuela but still had the image of an outsider since he did not belong to any of the old parties. He represented his own party: *Fifth Republic Movement* (MVR²⁵).

After taking power in 1999 Chávez first started the process of drafting new constitution, which was ratified in a national referendum when it won 72 percent of the vote. The opposition criticized the new constitution because, for example, it seemed to centralize power after the decentralizing process of the 1990s, and the autonomy of the Central Bank was compromised. (Ellner 2008, 111.) The new constitution also put forward the concepts of participatory democracy²⁶ and radical democracy, which later became central themes of Chavismo. On many televised occasions Chávez was portrayed holding a copy of the Constitution, thus possessing a copy became a Chavista symbol (Interview no. 27) – the government helped by handing out free copies.

²⁵ MVR Movimiento Quinta República

²⁶ Already in the 1990s there were proposals for participatory democracy in Venezuela and in fact they were applied in leftist regional and local governments (cf. López Maya & al. 2002).

Early on in the Chávez presidency the Venezuelan political scene became polarized between the government coalition *Patriotic Pole*, which consisted of MVR, MAS, Patria para todo (PPT, in English: Homeland for All) and PCV. The opposition consisted of AD, COPEI, Project Venezuela and a new party called Primero Justicia. (Ellner 2008, 111.)

In November 2001, Chávez's government enacted a package of 49 special laws. This package was significant because the laws were meant to reverse the neoliberal development of the 1990s and also outlined the radicalization of the Chavista movement. Moreover, it intensified the polarization as the parties MAS and the so-called Miquilena wing of the MVR left the government coalition and joined the opposition bloc (then called *Democratic Coordinator*), whose only objective now was to remove Chávez from power. Also the Union Party (of Francisco Arias Cárdenas, the second-in-command during the coup attempt of February 1992), and many other social organizations joined the opposition group. However, Podemos was to split from MAS and join the Chavista bloc. (Ellner 2008, 112-114.)

As Chávez was fighting neoliberalist measures during the beginning of his administration he was defending many of the policies adopted during Carlos Andres Pérez's first term in the 1970s (Ellner 2008, 85). Weyland (2011) points out that there are many similarities between the policies taken by Chávez and Carlos Andres Pérez's first term – with the difference being that Chávez used more confrontational strategies and put more pressure on domestic and foreign business. Some of the aspects of Pérez's policies were to invest windfall revenues for long-term development, build the aluminum and steel industry through state-owned enterprises, the creation or expansion of social programs – including schools and university scholarships and taking a leading role in the Third World movement that demanded a New International Economic Order (Weyland 2011, 78). In the beginning of 2002 Chávez went for the first time beyond his original objectives, such as nationalizing the oil industry²⁷, and started to radicalize his politics.

At the end of 2001, the opposition parties allied with the Venezuelan Federation of the Chambers of Commerce FEDECAMARAS²⁸ and the Confederation of the Workers of Venezuela CTV²⁹, who were behind the coup attempt of April 2002 and the general strike in December 2002 that lasted for two months (Ellner 2008, 113-114). However, there are numerous versions of the events of 2002³⁰. Here I go through only some important details about the events. As Samet (2013, 528) has indicated, the Chavista side believes that the events of April 2002 were “a classic coup involving a conscious conspiracy, which was aided and abetted by the private press”. The opposition side

²⁷ In fact, Chávez's minister of energy and mines was Alvaro Silva Calderón who was one of the main characters in the 1970s industry's nationalization project (Ellner 2008, 85).

²⁸ Federación de Cámaras y Asociaciones de Comercio y Producción de Venezuela

²⁹ Confederación de Trabajadores de Venezuela

³⁰ cf. Bartley & Briain 2003; Britto Gracia 2006; Ellner 2008; Gott 2005; Samet 2013; Villegas 2009.

say that “there was no deliberate strategy in place; rather, a chaotic series of events led to a temporary vacuum of power”. In both of these versions the Venezuelan people have an important role. In the first one it is emphasized that the people went to the streets and supported Chávez and in this way forced the persons behind the coup to retreat. In the latter one the popular uprising against Chávez is highlighted as is the responsibility of the Chávez administration for initiating an outburst of violence (Samet 2013, 528).

On April 11, 2002 there were demonstrations opposing President Chávez and his politics on the streets of Caracas. In the afternoon, violent confrontations broke out and initially the responsibility for the deaths was placed on the government. Nineteen were killed and many more wounded. These events were also televised. Later on that day, members of the military forces escorted Chávez out of Miraflores, the presidential palace. On April 12 the chairman of FEDECAMARAS, Pedro Carmona, took power and the events were again televised. Most of the high-profile members of Chávez’s government were hiding but some supporters stayed around Miraflores. Details of the situation started to leak out even though the mainstream media did not report on the events. By the morning of April 13 the citizens of Caracas’s barrios had come to the presidential palace to demand the return of Chávez. Since Carmona did not gain support behind closed doors Chávez was able to return to power after 48 hours. (Ellner 2008; Samet 2013; Villegas 2009; several interviews.) In the following chapter 2.2, I will look at the events from the media’s perspective.

There is also a deeper divide in Venezuelan society that was revealed in the events of April 2002 according to Chávez’s supporters. It is said that in the demonstrations of April 11 to replace President Chávez, approximately 95 percent of the people were “white, European, sons of Europeans, the grandchildren of Europeans” while 95 percent of the people waiting for Chávez at the Miraflores presidential palace on April 13 were mestizos (Villegas 2009, 11-12). This stresses the ethnic divides among the population and also the intent of the Chavista movement to construct the people, their people, as a once marginalized group of society that now supports Chávez.

After the coup when Chávez was back in power he tried to moderate his rhetoric and offered the opposition concessions. Nevertheless, in December 2002 the heads of CTV, FEDECAMARAS, and PDVSA declared a general strike in order to force Chávez out of power. The opposition supported the actions. The strike that lasted for almost two months affected the Venezuelan economy but was not able to affect Chávez’s position. In fact, Chávez started to implement new programs and policies that would later take on the form of missions, which resulted in changes in company structures, land distribution, tax reform, the forming of community organization, and the rejection of existing links with organized business interests. In 2005, Chávez called for his “socialism of the twenty-first century”. (Ellner 2008 118-126.) As Ellner (2014; cf. 2008) points out, Chávez’s strategy was to take “advantage of each electoral and non-electoral victory by immediately carrying out measures

that deepened the process of change, initiating new stages in the transformation of the country, and weakening adversaries.” This may also be seen in the media field as, for example the Ley RESORTE process³¹ began after the events of 2002 and RCTV’s license was not renewed in 2007, following Chávez’s electoral victory of 2006.

In 2006 Chávez won the presidential election with over 60 percent of all the votes cast. López Maya (2011) suggests that Chávez’s presidency consists of two periods. The first one lasted until 2006 and it included the idea of participatory democracy. After the electoral victory in 2006 Chávez’s administration turned into a highly centralized state apparatus, and the power was concentrated in Chávez. Also, the separation of powers ceased to exist. The participatory approach was weakened as the communal councils established their *modus operandi*. (López Maya 2011, 236.)

In early June 2011 Chávez went to Cuba³². It was said that he needed knee surgery. However, his stay was prolonged and finally at the end of June, after a period of various rumors, Chávez ended an extraordinarily long media silence and announced (in a televised speech from Cuba) that he had been diagnosed with a malignant tumor in the pelvic region and that it had been operated on by Cuban doctors (this is one of the cases analyzed, see chapter 5.1.2). Chávez returned to Venezuela at the beginning of July but never revealed what kind of cancer he had. Later it was announced he was free of the cancer and he started his presidential election campaign. He won the elections against the opposition candidate Henrique Capriles Radonski in October 2012 but two months after the election, in December, Chávez announced that there was a recurrence of his cancer. In December 2012 he left for Cuba for another operation but upon his departure he stated that Minister and Vice President Nicolas Maduro would be his successor as president if his condition worsened. According to the official information Chávez was operated on but from December until his death he remained out of the public eye. He was flown from Cuba to Venezuela in February and on March 5, 2013 it was announced that the president of Venezuela, Hugo Chávez Frías had passed away. Chávez’s death was shocking news to many Venezuelans but Nicolas Maduro was able to uphold Chavismo and he won the following presidential elections, beating Henrique Capriles Radonski in May 2013.

Chavismo and the party structure

Supporters of Chávez and Chavismo as a movement have traditionally been connected to the poor and underprivileged sectors of Venezuelan society by academic research³³ and the media (Lupu 2010, 8; Valencia Ramírez 2005).

³¹ The law of social responsibility of radio and television

³² This paragraph is based on ethnographic notes and several articles from the newspapers *Correo del Orinoco*, *El Nacional*, *El Universal* and *Últimas Noticias*.

³³ Canache 2006; Cannon 2008; Hellinger 2005; López Maya 2003; López Maya & Lander 2007; Roberts 2003a; 2003b; Sylvia & Danopoulos 2003

However, this is not the whole picture since even though the lower socio-economic classes contributed to the election of Chávez in the elections of 1998, his support base did change. The upper socio-economic classes were always the most likely to vote against Chavismo, but in later elections (especially in the election of 2006), Chavismo seemed to appeal to the middle classes as well. (Lupu 2010; Valencia Ramírez 2005.)

As we can see already from the electoral-base and its changes Chavistas are not a homogenous group even though they are often portrayed as one. Chavismo as a movement was also constructed of different groups varying in their degree of independence from each other and the state. What is notable is that many of the groups existed before Chávez's political career (Valencia Ramírez 2005), e.g. many community media organizations (Interview no. 33). These groups were, for example Bolivarian Circles, cooperatives, socialist enterprises and communal councils³⁴ (Ellner 2006; García-Guadilla 2008; Hawkins & Hansen 2006; Valencia Ramírez 2005). After re-election in 2006, Chávez's politics developed a new emphasis and were directed towards "popular power," which was a new form of participatory democracy (Canache 2012, 100). On an individual level the most typical *radical* Chavista came from the lowest economic class (class E³⁵), had not finished primary school and was over 55 years old. *Extreme* opposition voters had university or technical education, belonged to higher economic classes (classes A and B) and were more than 55 years old. (Quiñones 2012.) Thus, it may be said that the stereotypes represent the extreme and the most radical supporters but it should be noted that in between these groups there was a large mass of people who played a significant role in the electoral politics. This large mass included moderate Chávez supporters and opposition supporters as well as so-called "ni-nis,"³⁶ who were neither Chavistas nor opposition supporters.

Chávez made changes in the party structures. He transformed the government coalition into one party, *The United Socialist Party of Venezuela* (PSUV), and by June 2007 more than five million had joined PSUV. However, three parties (Podemos³⁷, PPT³⁸ and PCV³⁹) stayed out of the PSUV. In

³⁴ In order to deepen the democracy of the country and direct it more in the direction of participatory democracy, Chávez promoted the formation of small neighborhood councils, called *concejos comunales*. Each of the councils represented between 200 and 400 families, and by early 2007 there were already 20,000 *concejos comunales* in the country. Each of the *concejos* was provided "with about USD 60,000 to undertake infrastructural and social projects" by the government. Chávez also encouraged the forming of larger organizations representing the *concejos comunales* on a regional and national level. (Ellner 2008, 127-128.)

³⁵ In Venezuela there are five official socio-economic classes, A being the richest and E being the poorest. In 2012 the income limits of these classes were A: more than 7000; B: 5000-7000; C: 3000-5000; D: 1500-3000; and E: less than 1500. (Source: Hinterlaces, Monitor País, November 2011 cit. Quiñones 2012).

³⁶ This comes from the Spanish phrase "*ni uno ni otro*" which means that "*neither one nor the other*".

³⁷ For years Podemos was somewhere between PSUV and the opposition, supporting Chávez in some cases and sometimes opposing. In 2009 Podemos joined MUD but joined Chávez again in 2013 (VTV 2013).

2007 the opposition started to focus on the university student movement, which had its own mobilization capacity. (Ellner 2008, 127-129.) Ever since then, the university students have played a notable role in the demonstrations (e.g. the RCTV case in 2007, demonstrations in February 2014). After Chávez reorganized his party the opposition formed *La Mesa de la Unidad Democrática* (MUD) in 2009 (www.unidadvenezuela.org) whose target was to replace Chávez and Chavistas with their own candidates in the upcoming elections.

Chávez's movement was not able to stand away from problems and there were many disputes within the PSUV. Also the moving positions of several parties (MAS, Podemos, and PPT) show that the alliance is not at all singular and unanimous in its opinions. Moreover, the problems in the movement were generally blamed on the lack of a political consciousness amongst the members. To correct the situation Chavistas called for the creation of what Che Guevara called the "New Socialist Man". The biggest problem within the Chavista movement was a failure to establish internal mechanisms of discussion and also Chávez as a supreme leader discouraged independent thinking and critique. (Ellner 2008, 130-131.)

According to Ellner (2008, 139-194), the Chavista movement's structure is complex consisting of at least four different ideological strands and two different approaches. The ideological strands he calls soft-liners, hard-liners⁴⁰ and Trotskyists. In addition to these three, occasionally a fourth group appears that is positioned between the soft-liners and the hard-liners. Many of the hard-liners used to be members of other leftist parties (e.g. PCV and the Liga Socialista) before they joined the Chavista movement and MVR (Valencia Ramírez 2007, 134, 137). According to the hard-liners the opposition cannot be trusted, and that is why they opt for an offensive strategy since the revolutionary process should always be put first in their opinion and compromise and fallback positions can only be used as a last resort. Trotskyists are positioned more to the left than hard-liners. They both share an emphasis on the intensification of the conflict but differ in their goals since the hard-liners do not have explicit long-term goals but trust that experiences and not preconceived notions will guide them to their goals. The soft-liners believe that the changes made are already far-reaching and long lasting. They are less radical, believe more in compromises and dialogue, and are open to negotiating with the business sector. In public debates the different strands are seldom seen but it does happen occasionally. They do not manifest their positions in an *organized* fashion in any kind of literature. (Ellner 2008, 139-174.) However, it should be noted that Chavistas do have many kinds of me-

³⁸ The PPT stayed out of PSUV and criticized both the government and the opposition. Later the party divided into different sections one of which one supported the opposition while two allied with Chávez.

³⁹ The PCV stayed outside of PSUV but backed Chávez during the years as a member in the Gran Polo Patriótico.

⁴⁰ Ellner (2008, 153) points out that Nicolas Maduro belongs to the hard-liners.

diums for expressing their thoughts, such as the national newspaper *Correo del Orinoco*, a local newspaper *Ciudad Caracas*, and the alternative website *Aporrea.org*. In addition to these four strands the military should be taken into account since Chávez had a special relationship with the armed forces because of his background. As Ellner (2008, 147) points out that for example, because of the civilian-military alliance's privileged position, some military officers were able to affect the internal democracy of the movement. In addition to this, they may have been even more prone to corruption. Moreover, since Chavismo consists of not only the political parties but also various social organizations, the movement lacks mechanisms for formulating positions and channeling messages upward. However, hard and soft-liners are able to speak out in proposals, arguments, and rhetoric at all levels. (Ellner 2008, 139-194.)

Since, from all of the different Chavista-minded media, *Correo del Orinoco* was chosen for the data in this research, the study offers an opportunity to look at how different groups within the movement are able to manifest themselves and whether they are able to spread their message outside of the similar-minded media (see chapter 5.1).

Because many Venezuelans perceived political parties as something elitist and corrupted due to their historical experiences, many Chavistas also avoided joining party activities. Therefore, there was also a system of grassroots level organizations that enabled the people to participate without associating themselves with political parties. These grassroots level organizations still served to give a sense of belonging to the Chavista movement and people were thus able identify themselves as a part of the revolution. Also Chávez encouraged both approaches, party structure and grassroots. The people functioning within the grassroots level often thought that they were selfless and dedicated to the cause, unlike the self-serving and even corrupt people within the party structure. Since these organizations functioned outside of the official party structure they were not accountable to the parties, nevertheless, their proposals were made directly to state decision-makers. This promotion of grassroots organizations, such as community councils, cooperatives and Bolivarian Circles, is one element of participatory democracy that was encouraged in the Constitution of 1999. The state had a vital role in creation of the organizations. However, the lifespan of many of them was short as the people involved moved on to government missions and other programs in the hope of better personal opportunities. (Ellner 2008, 139-194.)

In the media sector an essential part of this grassroots approach was community media and the independent national producers (PNI) that are discussed more in detail in the next chapter. Another important aspect of the Chavista organizations is that they enhanced and empowered different groups in the Venezuelan society like women, and indigenous people. The state had an important role in this process even though these organizations eventually aimed at autonomy. Furthermore, the grassroots organizations also had a global level approach in addition to the local level. They often em-

phasized that people are struggling all over the world and that they also wanted change in other communities outside of Venezuela. (Ellner 2008, 183, 189.), making Venezuela part of a global phenomenon.⁴¹

Chávez himself tried to find a balance between the different groups within the Chavista movement. For example, many of his sayings such as “revolution within a revolution” were perceived differently by the hard-liners and soft-liners. Moreover, sometimes Chávez used the strict rhetoric of the hard-liners but sometimes he withdrew and suggested compromises. (Ellner 2008, 139-194.)

As noted, clientelism plays an important role in Venezuelan and Latin American culture (cf. Hallin & Papathanassopoulos 2002; Guerrero 2014). During Chávez’s era there were many occasions that cemented clientelistic attitudes, such as using political criteria for employment purposes. For example, in 2003 there was a petition to rerun the presidential elections. The list of the persons who signed the petition was published, which caused controversy since it was said that people who had signed the list should not work in ministries. In PDVSA many of these people were not fired but they were not granted future opportunities. (Ellner 2008, 160.) There have been similar lists in Venezuela, resulting in constant rumors and fear⁴². The most famous of them is called the Tascon list.

Venezuelan left

The Venezuelan situation cannot be investigated without taking a closer look at leftist politics. Chávez was openly promoting socialism of 21st century and not only that; his rise was a part of leftist rise in the whole region. The Left can be defined as “political actors who seek, as a *central programmatic objective*, to reduce social and economic inequalities”. They aim to “use public authority to redistribute wealth and/or income to lower-income groups, erode social hierarchies, and strengthen the voice of disadvantaged groups in the political process.” (Levitsky & Roberts 2011, 5.) Historically the focus of the leftist movements has been on class-based politics but they have been forced to broaden their perspective and take into account inequalities based on ethnicity, race and gender. However, this process has been slow in Latin America. (Yashar 2011.)

⁴¹ As the structure of Chavismo was complicated because it consisted of different levels and approaches, the history and culture of clientelismo and the corruption that prevailed in Venezuela inherently created the risk of failure because control and the systems of control were as diverse as the organizations themselves. Also the global aspect is seen in the data of this research as many Venezuelans, especially Chavistas, talk about being a part of a global phenomenon (see category 1 in chapter 6.1).

⁴² “Secret vote is something some people are concerned about in Venezuela. Two government workers have told me that they are afraid that their vote would not be secret and there might be consequences for voting for the “wrong” candidate. That is why they either try not to vote or they vote for the government party” (Ethnographic notes from February 2012).

The Venezuelan left was historically formed by different groups, which were positioned from center-left to extreme communists. In the absence of large leftist parties these leftist tendencies were found within AD and COPEI, which dealt with their leftist divisions internally, and not always in a democratic way. In both of them, leftist factions appeared but were heavily suppressed disregarding the parties' internal democratic rules. However, these factions were not insignificant because they managed to raise issues, such as social inequality, dependency on foreign capital and technology, the assertion of an independent foreign policy and internal democratization, all of which later became the focal points of the Chavista movement. (Ellner 2008, 3, 76-77.) Also the URD was positioned center-left but its role was marginal. The oldest communist party was *Partido Comunista de Venezuela* (PCV) that started to function in 1931 in Caracas (prensapcv.wordpress.com). However, the socialist left of the country was not able to gain any power after the fall of dictatorship in 1958 and it became isolated during the following years. During the era of President Betancourt (1959-1964) he tried to demobilize the general population and was even hostile to the left, but his administration still favored democratic institutions. (Ellner 2008, 56.)

As Betancourt reacted harshly to several strikes between 1960-1962, the Venezuelan left reacted by escalating their rhetoric and tactics. In the 1960s the leftists began to stray from Marxist class analysis and began more direct guerrilla warfare in rural areas, although that was against the advice of pro-leftist trade union leaders⁴³ (Ellner 1993, 41). Military uprisings in 1962 in Carúpano and Puerto Cabello were the start of a guerrilla movement that expanded throughout the decade. As a result of the guerrilla war, the left was excluded even more from general politics. However, the Venezuelan left did not take into account that the country differed drastically from other Latin American countries where the left had chosen the guerrilla strategy because Venezuela – despite of its faults – had democracy. (Ellner 2008, 60, 64.) Nevertheless, this is an episode in Venezuelan history, which was not openly discussed in the media and was not taught at school (personal communication⁴⁴). In the 1970s the far-leftist groups ended their remaining armed guerrilla warfare and in the 1980s the left-wing to all intents and purposes did not exist. The media did not largely report the events (Ellner 2008, 56), which is one reason why they are not a part of the nation's collective memory.

President Caldera was favorable towards the communists and legalized the PCV in 1969. He also granted amnesty to leftist guerrillas and later in 1973 legalized the MIR (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria), which was a Fidelista faction split-off from AD in 1960. In 1971 a group that was the most committed to guerrilla strategy left the Communist party and formed MAS (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria). In the 1970s and 1980s MAS, the biggest Leftist party disregarded class politics and underlined polit-

⁴³ In the beginning of the democratic era trade unions were legalized (Ellner 2008, 58).

⁴⁴ While conducting the fieldwork I talked with several different societal actors.

ical reforms and elections. Later in 1988 MAS united with MIR. (Ellner 2008, 5, 62-70; www.masvenezuela.com.ve.) One of the founders of MAS and an ex-guerrilla was Teodoro Petkoff⁴⁵, who (at the time of conducting the research) was editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Tal Cual*, which is one of the newspapers researched in the data. In the presidential elections of 1998, MAS decided to back Hugo Chávez's candidacy, which caused some of the founders of the party, including Petkoff, to leave. In 2001 the party demanded Chávez stop attacking several social sectors, including the media, and expressed concern over increasing poverty and the paralysis affecting national productivity. This disrupted relations between Chávez and MAS, and later MAS joined the opposition coalition, MUD. (www.masvenezuela.com.ve.)

Another notable leftist party that diverged from PCV in 1971 was called la Causa Radical (Causa R) (lacaucar.org.ve). While MAS was more middle-class based, workers and other non-privileged classes supported Causa R. In the 1990s MAS and Causa R joined the supporters of neoliberal measures. (Ellner 2008, 9, 83.) During the Chávez's era Causa R was also one of the parties in MUD.

Finally, in the 1990s when leftist parties were able to enter politics as they were no longer seen as a threat due to democratic transitions and because the Soviet bloc had collapsed (Levitsky & Roberts 2011, 8), they slowly began to form an electoral base on a micro level. For example, after the 1992 elections Causa R's Aristóbulo Istúriz was governing in Caracas, and Andres Velásquez was re-elected for a second term in the state of Bolívar and MAS won in three states. Local leftist success existed elsewhere in Latin America – at the time Brasília, Sao Paulo, San Salvador, Mexico City, and Montevideo, all had leftist mayors (Goldfrank 2011). This allowed the Leftist parties to gain experience and a reputation for administration, which solidified the support base and strengthened organizations (Chávez & Goldfrank 2004).

Venezuela was not alone in the region in seeing the left rise by the end of the 20th century. Levitsky & Roberts (2011, 7-11) explain the phenomenon with reference to three different factors. Firstly, poverty (cf. chapter 1) and fortified democratic institutions that allowed different political parties the space to act, especially in the 1990s. By the end of the 1990s it was evident that states had failed to address the problems of inflation, the fiscal crisis, the weakening labor unions and ideological disarray (Levitsky & Roberts 2011, 8), all of which allowed the left to “re-politicize” inequality (Luna & Filgueira 2009; Roberts 2008). Secondly, neoliberalism cannot be the only reason but the economic crisis of 1998-2002 helps to explain the turn towards more left-wing politics. In countries where neoliberal policies had succeeded, the parties stayed in power. However, in countries where the economic downturn of 1998-2002 hit hardest the people started to look for alternatives to the current politics. Since many of the parties in power were right of center, the left

⁴⁵ Petkoff was also presidential candidate of MAS in the elections of 1983 and 1988 (www.masvenezuela.com.ve).

was an alternative. Thirdly, the commodity boom in the mid-2000s that started after the economic downturn helped leftist governments to stay in power. Economic growth rates were higher than they had been in decades in Latin America during this time. This assisted the leftist governments re-elections in several countries, including Brazil (2006, 2010), Chile (2006), Venezuela (2006), Argentina (2007), Bolivia (2009), Ecuador (2009), and Uruguay (2009). The export boom also assisted the leftist governments in another way as they were actually able to govern according to leftist politics and were able to redistribute material benefits to poorer constituencies. By the end of the decade, leftist governments had shown that they were able to maintain economic stability and this encouraged other leftist parties to act as well, e.g. in El Salvador and Paraguay. (Levitsky & Roberts 2011, 7-11.)

One of the leading ideas among the leftist movements was participative democracy – even though also Leninist groups were strong. This underlines the fact that Chávez did not come from nowhere but that leftist ideas were already present and growing within society. However, it is notable that leftism was repressed for years. Thus, once it finally attained a foothold it was able to propose a real alternative. It was also able to distinguish itself from its rivals by proposing participative democracy instead of the old parties and representative democracy that did not seem to answer to the people's needs. However, Chávez's policies were not the pure result of a leftist revival since he combined participative democracy with a control system for which he was also criticized by some of his supporters (Interview no. 11).

It is important to note that the left cannot be lumped together as one movement or group. Venezuela has always had Trotskyists and also more traditional clientelist Leninist approaches. Petkoff (2005) and Castañeda (2006) have discussed the two lefts that are different from each other. Also, different leftist approaches make it possible to understand different political movements between different Latin American countries and within a country (Goldfrank 2011, 163).

Some suggest that there is no point in trying to find a pattern behind the policy choices made in Venezuela as there is no grand preconceived model and the actions are improvised, responding to conjunctural factors in society (Lander 2009, 57). This might be partly true, nevertheless, by using theories of populism and taking historical factors into account, many of these policy choices can be explained or at least shown to have a broader context.

2.2 The media in Venezuela

Over the years, the media became a powerful actor in Venezuela, like elsewhere in Latin America, since the media sector functioned as an essential part of the rest of the economy and culture. Thus, many historical aspects discussed earlier and cultural features, such as clientelism and the question of race, were inseparable parts of the media as well.

In the following chapter, the history of the development of the media in Latin America, especially Venezuela, is discussed. Once again this is not a complete story but the details that are important to the study are focused on in order to understand the data and the results. Then we continue to Chávez and his government, their media agenda and relations with the media sector. As we will notice, politics, economics and power are interlocked with the media sector. This aspect is discussed last of all in this chapter.

2.2.1 THE RISE OF PRIVATE MEDIA

Already before Chávez's era a variety of Venezuelan media outlets were important and powerful actors in society. This is connected to the overall political development of the country.

The development of the media before Chávez

As in many other countries, the first actual media also in Venezuela was a newspaper. The first newspaper was founded in independent Venezuela in 1818 and called *El Correo del Orinoco*. (Aguirre & al. 1999.) This is also where the current government-supported newspaper called *Correo del Orinoco*, which forms part of the data of this research, took its name from – despite only being founded in 2009 by the Ministry of Communication and Information (Minci). The oldest newspaper in the data, *El Universal*, was founded in 1909 (Aguirre & al. 1999). The other significant national Venezuelan newspaper *El Nacional* was founded in 1943 (www.el-nacional.com). These two newspapers, *El Universal* and *El Nacional*, have combined sales of over 350.000 copies per day. However, *El Universal* attracts more advertising revenue since it has a more loyal and concentrated metropolitan audience and a more complete business section and traditional job search section. (Cañizález & Lugo-Ocando 2008, 193-194.) *Últimas Noticias*, which is also studied in this research, was founded in 1941 and in 1998 it evolved into the enterprise *Cadena Capriles*, consisting of several print media. In the 2000s *Últimas Noticias* has had the largest circulation of all the newspapers in Venezuela (www.ultimasnoticias.com.ve), even though its readership is very much Caracas-based (Cañizález & Lugo-Ocando 2008, 194). *Últimas Noticias* has been described as exceptional since it is one of the few able to maintain more or less balanced news reporting – even during the conflict. Its director and editor Díaz Rangel was a known Chávez supporter but during the time of this research the newspaper's editorial staff included both Chavistas and opposition supporters, and they were able to express their political stance openly in the work place, which is rare in the politically polarized situation of the country (Interview no. 23). Another important player in the print media sector is *Bloque de Armas* group, which publishes, for example, the newspapers *Diario 2001* and *Diario Meridiano*.

Newspapers were significant since during the 19th century they were practically the only tools that could be used to form an opinion on a public issue (Aguirre & al. 1999). Because dictator Pérez Jiménez decided to invest in television (Interviews no. 12 & no. 26), the first television channel, TVN 5, started as early as November 22, 1952. Venezuela was no different from other Latin American countries, and during the first 40 years of broadcasting, the media industry experienced a major boom. A year after launching TVN 5, *Radio Caracas Televisión* (RCTV) and *Televisa* (later Venevisión) started broadcasting. (Aguirre & al. 1999.)

Cadena Venezolana de Televisión (later also known as VTV or Canal 8) began in 1964. It was the only channel that had the capability to broadcast throughout in the whole country and started national broadcasting in 1974. It was originally a private channel but in 1970s it took control of the transmission of the channel TVN 5. (Aguirre & al. 1999; González Liendo 2012; www.vtv.gob.ve.)

The first color program was broadcast in 1979. Televen and the country's first pay-channel, Omnivisión, both started broadcasting in 1988. In the 1990s specialized television channels started to spread⁴⁶. (Aguirre & al. 1999.) One of the new channels, Globovisión, had a central role in the conflict between the government and the private media during Chávez's era. Globovisión is a regional, not a national, channel and its studios are located in Caracas.

The first radio program in Venezuela was transmitted in 1926 (Aguirre & al. 1999). In 2008 there were 180 radio stations⁴⁷ in the country (www.cia.gov). Their number changed drastically a couple of years later as many radio stations' licenses were not renewed. Even though only 14 percent of Venezuelans consider radio their main source of information (Quiñones 2012), it may still be considered a significant media since it is something that is often in the background, and may therefore be considered as a secondary source of information for many Venezuelans⁴⁸. However, in the Venezuelan context radio has traditionally had a mostly regional influence⁴⁹ (Mayobre 2002, 183).

The importance of the Internet is growing as a source of information, even though only 9 percent stated news websites and 8 percent Twitter or Facebook as their main source of information in 2011. However, not all have access to the Internet, especially in the lower socio-economic classes (classes D

⁴⁶ Some of the new ones were Meridiano TV (sports), Puma TV (music), and Globovisión (information and news).

⁴⁷ 46 AM stations, 131 FM stations and 3 shortwave

⁴⁸ At least in Caracas radio's importance has grown among drivers since radio is a way to entertain and inform oneself during the daily traffic jams that may last for hours (Ethnographic note).

⁴⁹ "At least two state governors and several senators and representatives were elected to their posts on the strength of their popularity as hosts of influential radio shows in their regions" (Mayobre 2002, 183-184).

and E). People, with an academic education and/or males are more likely to use the Internet in Venezuela as a source of information. (Quiñones 2012.)

Other noteworthy media are community and alternative media. In Latin America there is a long tradition of community media⁵⁰. In fact, in Latin America there have always been more citizen media projects than in any other region (Mwangi 2001, 24-25). In Venezuela they have been part of life since the 1970s (O'Sullivan-Ryan & Kaplún 1978). However, the number of community and alternative media is largely unknown since many of them had to function clandestinely (Interview no. 33). At the time of the research some of the most significant community media in Caracas included, for example, *Catia TVe*, *Radio Negro Primero*, and *Petare TV*. However, community media's position as a neutral media representing citizens is not so simple since many of them received financial and/or technical aid from the government. In addition to community media, there are also alternative media projects such as *Ávila TV*, which started as a university television channel but which was later included in the government projects.

Television has possibly the greatest influence of all the media in Latin America and Venezuela, and it has a vast economic and political impact. In 2011 40.3 percent of Venezuelans stated television as their main medium for receiving information, even though the Internet had a growing significance. Newspapers were the principal medium of 28.9 percent of the Venezuelans. However, in an economically and politically polarized country certain aspects, such as gender, age and socio economic class need to be taken into account when assessing the results. Especially for Chávez's supporters television was the main medium while opposition sympathizers relied more on the Internet. (Quiñones 2012.)

In 1999 when Chávez was only starting his term, up to 60 percent of all the television programs were of North American origin – even though Venezuela had traditionally had plenty of its own production as well. In the 1980s RCTV and Venevisión, in particular, produced a variety of telenovelas, many of which were sold and broadcast on the international market. Later Mexico, Brazil and Argentina started to market their own production aggressively and the share of Venezuelan telenovelas declined. (Aguirre & al. 1999.) Also because television has a major role in Latin American everyday life, there are plenty of television channels⁵¹.

Like elsewhere in Latin America, Venezuelan television channels have mainly been privately owned. The two most important owner groups have been *Grupo Phelps* and *Grupo Cisneros*. Also VTV was originally privately owned by *Grupo Vollmer*. William H. Phelps founded the country's first commercial radio station, *1-Broadcasting Caracas* (1BC), in 1930. Later the

⁵⁰ Already 50 years ago in Colombia and Bolivia there were participatory forms of citizens' media.

⁵¹ Television channels broadcasting nationally in 2012 were Televen, Venevisión, Venezolana de Televisión (VTV), Visión Venezuela Televisión (ViVe TV), Canal I (ex Puma TV), Meridiano TV, and TVes. In addition to these there are several television channels that broadcast only regionally. Some of them in the Caracas region are Globovisión, Vale TV, ANTV, TeleSUR, and Ávila TV.

name was changed to Radio Caracas, and *Radio Caracas Televisión* started broadcasting in 1953. Phelps also took part in print media and published *El Diario de Caracas* for 16 years until 1995. Grupo Phelps also bought *Grupo Cameron*, which had a majority share of *Televen*. (Aguirre & al. 1999, 21.) In 1999 Grupo Phelps had 26 percent of the investment in advertising in the country (Pellegrino 2004, 8).

The original owner of Grupo Cisneros, Diego Cisneros, started his first company in 1939. The company started expanding in the home market in the 1970s and it bought the operator of the channel four, Televisa, that was later transformed into Venevisión. In the 1980s the company expanded abroad as well. (Aguirre & al. 1999.) In the 1990s half of the company's business was outside of Venezuela (Aguirre & al. 1999) and the company was significant on a national level since Grupo Cisneros had 34 percent of the country's investment in advertising (Pellegrino 2004, 8).

Whether in television, radio or print media, journalism has not developed enough as an autonomous institution in Latin America to be able to have certain professional values and practices. This is reflected in the lack of strong journalistic institutions of self-regulation and a high rate of corruption. The clientelistic pattern is an explanatory factor; clientelistic relationships have also played a key role in social and political organizations in the region including the media. (cf. Guerrero 2014; Hallin & Papathanassopoulos 2002.) However, like elsewhere, Venezuelan journalists have organized themselves and there is a professional organization for journalists called *Colegio Nacional de Periodistas* (CNP), which was founded in 1976 and it aims to defend democratic values together with *Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Prensa* (SNTTP, founded in 1946). There is also a journalistic code of ethics (Código de Ética del Periodista) and the rules of National Convention of Journalists (Convención Nacional de Periodistas) that the organizations monitor. The organization that takes care of the journalists' social security issues is *el Instituto de Previsión Social del Periodista* (IPSP). (www.cnpven.org; ipsperiodista.org; www.snttp.com.ve.) However, these organizations are not considered to be very powerful. Many individual journalists choose not to take part in them (personal communication with informants) so a journalist's professional identity may be formed in many ways.

The media tangled up with politics

Conflicts between the media and politics were nothing new in Venezuela before the era of Chávez and there were already several occasions of sanctions, fees and other confrontations between the different media outlets and the state and government⁵² (Cañizález 1991; MPPTI 2007). Private media outlets

⁵² In 1976 RCTV was closed for three days for spreading false news about Carlos Andres Pérez. In 1980 RCTV was shut down for 36 hours for broadcasting a "sensational" program about the psychiatric community in Catia la Mar. In 1981 RCTV was shut down for 24 hours for presenting three seconds of pornographic images in the morning. In 1984 RCTV received a warning because the channel was

often criticized political parties, especially in the 1980s when society was divided into opponents and supporters of privatization and reconfiguring the democratic system. The opponents often represented the underprivileged classes of society, while supporters included business circles that wanted to deepen democracy and reduce of centralized political power (Ellner 2008, 83-84). Some of the more vocal members of these business circles were *El Nacional* and *Radio Caracas*⁵³ (Coppedge 1994, 160). Neoliberals were represented by the periodical *VenEconomy*, which was connected to the Director of RCTV, Marcel Granier (Ellner 2008, 84). This is why it was also easy to connect the media and neoliberal politics in Venezuela (see chapter 6). The media were also involved in scandals that had political consequences. However, this is nothing extraordinary in Latin America since political conflicts and investigative reporting have caused political scandals throughout the region (Waisbord 2000). For example, a media scandal caused the removal of Carlos Andres Pérez from the Venezuelan presidency in 1993.

In general, the Latin American media sector is highly “Americanized” as US capital, technology and content expanded into the region and saw it as a prime market. Yet, it should be noted that journalistic practices were influenced by trends and debates in Europe and North America. (Waisbord 2014, 26.) Private media in Venezuela were criticized (e.g. by Pasquali) for being too powerful and clustered in the hands of few influential men. This was a prominent trend throughout the whole region and it enabled a clientelistic relationship between the media groups and politicians (Guerrero 2014). In general, post-dictatorship era politicians needed the media to transmit their messages to the masses and to compete for power and – in a symbiotic relationship – the established traditional media needed politicians in order to maintain their privileges (Corrales & Sandoval 2005; Matos 2012). It is noteworthy that in Venezuela the established media was already old, and therefore it had experience and connections both before and after the democratic era. This may have pushed them to be more central actors in a society. This is the case in many Latin American countries where new political groups did not change the ownership of the media and the media became key actors (Guerrero 2014, 47).

As the neoliberal policies took over in the 1980s and state deregulation expanded to different areas of society, many media outlets took advantage of this since they were able to occupy space left from the state’s retreat as they were well organized and had specific interests (Mastrini & Bolaño 2000 in Guerrero 2014, 45). Also the major media groups in the region were able to

making fun of the president and his wife. In 1989 RCTV, Televen and Venevisión were sanctioned because they had broadcasted cigarette commercials. In 1991 a part called La Escuelita was taken out of the program La Rocheta. In 2005 RCTV and Venevisió were sanctioned for oligopolistic actions. VTV has also been sanctioned for transmitting a pornographic program and broadcasting in color longer than was permitted. (Cañizález 1991, MPPTI 2007.)

⁵³ In 1987 RCTV’s Marcel Granier took a stance and drafted a document named *Mas y mejor democracia* (More and better democracy).

benefit from the reduction of the role of the state and the weakness of anti-trust regulation (Fox & Waisbord 2002b). The major media groups dominated the scene in Latin America and the largest ones according to the estimates, owned the production, storage, commercialization and distribution processes and units of over 80 percent of the content that citizens received – even though several new television channels and other services were created in the 1990s. (Guerrero 2014, 47.) The cultural and economic dominance of the private media groups is something that the Chavistas perceived as a threat and were trying to change.

Even though the media were mostly in the hands of private owners the state actors still experimented with new tactics for using the media. During Rafael Caldera's first presidency between 1969 and 1974 there was a new way of communicating between the president and the people. The president had a television program called *Habla el Presidente* where he presented government policies and other state issues. (Interviews no. 12 & no. 24.) *Cadenas* were also used to some extent; *cadenas* are important governmental announcements broadcast on every television channel and radio station simultaneously about state issues. Currently they are included in the organic law of telecommunications (la *Ley Orgánica de Telecomunicaciones*, LOTEL) and the law of the social responsibility of radio and television (la *Ley de Responsabilidad Social en Radio y Televisión*, Ley RESORTE).

2.2.2 CHÁVEZ AND THE MEDIA

Chávez remarked on the importance of the media and started to develop not only his own media strategy but also new media policies in order to challenge the power of old media actors. This reached a point that is often referred to as “media war”.

Development of the media during Chávez's administration

The private media mostly supported the candidacy of Chávez in the presidential election of 1998 but later the key media outlets criticized his politics – *Últimas Noticias* being an exception (Samet 2013, 531). There are several opinions about when this started to happen. Some say the turning point was already during the beginning of Chávez's term (cf. Delgado-Flores 2006) and some think it was in 2001 (cf. Bisbal 2009a, 17⁵⁴) when Chávez started to lean more and more to the left. Public antipathy towards the mainstream media was prevailing when Chávez began his term because the mainstream media had lowered its quality and partly abandoned a sense of social responsibility (Mayobre 2002).

⁵⁴ According to Bisbal (2009a, 17) the turning point was 06.27.2001, but already in March 2001 Chávez had stated that the “media are enemies of the revolution”.

However, it should be noted that the beginning of the relationship between Chávez and the media was close, even though Mayobre (2002, 183-184) notes that, unlike previous parliaments, there were no *direct* links between the National Assembly and the media during the first years of Chávez's administration. *El Nacional* and *Venevisión* had especially close relations with Chávez and they reported the triumph of the president in detail. Moreover, the new administration was staffed with military and media staff, who received positions in ministries, or key positions in the state media and some remained in different media outlets ready to defend Chávez's political project. (Bisbal 2009a, 16-17.) As one of the interviewees said:

*"[Chávez and the private media] were really close. Many important mediums of the country supported the candidacy of the president [Chávez]. There were cases of biased owners in the media that formed a part of ministerial cabinet."*⁵⁵

(Interview no. 24)

As described in the previous chapter, one of the most important turning points in recent Venezuelan history is the coup of April 2002 and how it affected relations between Chávez and the media. Even though the media had already started to criticize Chávez before April 2002, the coup changed everything and relations never were the same because Chávez started to especially blame four of the main private television channels – RCTV, Globovisión, Televen and Venevisión – for taking part in the events. He even called the television channels the four horsemen of the apocalypse (*los 4 jinetes de la Apocalipsis*) (Interview no. 24).

As previously noted there are several different versions of the events of April 2002. According to Chávez's supporters the private media was behind the coup (cf. Bartley & Briain 2003; Britto Garcia 2006). Whether this is the case or not is not relevant for this research but what is noteworthy is that the media's actions before and during the events are an integral part of the chain of events. Already before the coup the media were reporting on negative issues about Chávez's popularity (Botía 2007, 263-270) and rumors were circulating about a coup (Meza & La Fuente 2004). Furthermore, the media also promoted the upcoming march so everyone knew where and when to show up (Samet 2013, 531). This way the media were "setting the scene" for the upcoming events either on purpose or by coincidence. During the events the television showed for example shootings (e.g. Puente Llaguno⁵⁶). One of the most symbolic actions during the coup was that while Chávez was holding

⁵⁵ "Eran muy cercanos, muchos medios importantes en el país apoyaban la candidatura del presidente. Hubo casos de personas vinculadas propietarios de los medios que formaron parte de su gabinete ministerial."

⁵⁶ Puente Llaguno (the Bridge of Llaguno) is a place where there was a shooting on the afternoon April 11 between Chávez's sympathizers and the opposition demonstrators. Several were killed.

a *cadena*, the four main private television channels split the television screen showing Chávez on one half and violence on the streets on the other half (Gott 2005, 226; Gunson 2004). The media owners and directors also met the chairman of FEDECAMARAS, the President of Venezuela (during the coup) Pedro Carmona, in a private meeting on April 13 (Villegas 2009) and the normal citizens were experiencing a news blackout from the mainstream media (Samet 2013, 531; Interview no. 27). Due to that, alternative and community media became key actors in addition to word of mouth (Interview no. 27). For example, *Radio Fe y Alegría* seemed to be one of the few that kept reporting on events and delivering much needed information to its audience (Interview no. 24).

The coup of 2002 affected to the government's attitude towards the private media, especially when combined with the oil industry's strike in 2002 and 2003. According to Botía (2005, 30) this is exactly when the government started to consider the importance of the media.

One of the first actions to enforce power over the media sector by the state was the forming of a new Ministry of Popular Power for Communication and Information (MinCI) in 2004; Andrés Izarra⁵⁷ was named as its first minister. State channel VTV's image was changed and new self-produced programs were broadcast, the coverage of the channel was broadened to 90 percent of the country and broadcasting was extended to 24 hours per day. On November 12, 2003 a new television channel, *Visión Venezolana* (ViVe TV), was launched. The idea was to enhance the revolution by describing the government's social policies and community projects. The government's communication strategy was based on maximizing the use of state media, spreading news and information about government's policies and representing Chávez and the revolution internationally. (Botía 2005, 30-33.) Also Telesur, which is owned by several Latin American countries⁵⁸, was founded in 2005 to challenge the North American perspective on the world. The channel's headquarters and studios are located in Caracas.

In May 2007 Minister of Telecommunications and Information Technology, Jesse Chacón⁵⁹, introduced the politics of the democratization of communication in Venezuela. According to it, the Venezuelan state had been developing a new communication model since the year 2000 that included as its main principals a) communication as a fundamental human right, b) freedom of expression and the right to receive information⁶⁰, c) the participation

⁵⁷ Andrés Izarra is a son of William Izarra who took part in the coup d'état of 1992.

⁵⁸ The owners include Venezuela (41 %), Argentina (20 %), Cuba (19 %), Uruguay (10 %), Bolivia (5 %), Ecuador (5 %) and Nicaragua (no data). However, these numbers do not necessarily reflect reality for several reasons. (González Ginestet 2015.)

⁵⁹ Jesse Chacon also took part in the coup of November 1992.

⁶⁰ The constitution of 1999 includes two articles about freedom of expression. However, Chávez and many freedom of expression organizations interpret these clauses differently (Tanner Hawkins 2003). In addition to the constitution there are also other laws that regulate the media such as the law of social responsibility of television and radio (Ley RESORTE), and the organic law of television (Ley LOTEL).

of citizens, and d) developing television as a public service. (MPPTI 2007; see also Salojärvi 2008, 44-50.) The democratization project, however, seemed to have a slow start because in 2010 the state television channels still had only about 5 percent of the total audience (Weisbrot & Ruttenberg 2010) and other government media projects or the citizen projects, including community media, were not widely consumed by citizens but by more specific groups (Several interviews). However, the value of the different citizen media projects should not be underestimated just because of the people involved in them (Salojärvi 2013).

One part of this democratization of communication was not renewing the broadcasting licence of RCTV in 2007. There is also lots of speculation whether that was done as a normal administrative procedure, as part of the democratizing of scarce radiowaves, or to silence a critical media outlet (cf. Salojärvi 2008). Nevertheless, as a result the then 53-year old, and economically one of the most significant⁶¹ television channels, RCTV, stopped broadcasting on national television and switched to cable television. This made Globovisión the only television channel left out of the “four horsemen of the apocalypse” as Televen and Venevisión had already changed their editorial lines. In June 2004 the owner of Venevisión, Gustavo Cisneros, who was accused of taking part in the coup negotiated with Chávez in a meeting mediated by Jimmy Carter. After the meeting Venevisión changed its editorial line and started to broadcast more even-handed news according to some. (Ellner 2008, 171; Interview no. 26.) The same happened with Televen. Later in 2010 the owners of Globovisión fled the country for charges on hoarding vehicles. Globovisión also had struggles later on, especially in 2011 when it was sentenced to pay fines of USD 2.1 millions for its coverage of the el Rodeo prison riots. It managed to pay the fee but Globovisión was sold in 2013 to new owners. (www.bbc.com.) Moreover, many radio stations suffered during the second half of Chávez’s era since dozens of them lost their licences and many suffered from a lack of advertising revenue (Several interviews).

The position of citizens’ media also changed drastically in Venezuela during Chávez’s era. Before 1999 there were only two small legal community television stations and some radio stations run by the church that operated legally. Alongside them, there were some illegal radio stations. (Madriz 2011.) Nowadays the number of legal community media has risen immensely and according to CONATEL (National Commission of Telecomunications) there were 244 community radios and 36 television channels in the whole country in 2013 (www.conatel.gob.ve). In addition to these, there were several community newspapers and Internet sites. However, there are also downsides to this phenomenon. Many regard all this democratization as just part of Chavez’s attempt to gain more control over the media in order to support the

⁶¹ During the last third of the year 2006 RCTV had 36 % of the gross income of all the television channels, Venevisión was the second with a 35 % share. The other channels were less significant. (MPPTI 2007.) These large shares of the market are echoed in the Chavista rhetoric calling them oligarchs.

president's own policies. According to Madriz (2011, 114) some of the features she found were that community media workers said that there is a freedom of opinion as long as you do not express "unhealthy criticism" towards Chávez or the Bolivarian revolution. She also found that low technical training affected the quality of broadcasting and the content of the media. A third major problem was the funding of the media. Community media were highly dependent on the direct subsidies, equipment, premises and advertising supplied by the state. (Madriz 2011, 114.) One important function of community media is to monitor local officials and in this way to increase transparency throughout society (Rodriguez 2011, 251). However, this function may be questioned if the medium is dependent on government funding or subsidies and technical equipment.

The newspapers did not occupy the center of attention – even though many of them also took a clear stance within the political scene. There were no laws restricting them but still many struggled, for example, due to a lack of print paper because newspaper publishers did not have enough dollars to buy paper from abroad. This well-known method of regulating the media caused them to reduce their pages or sometimes especially in the local press they were not able to publish some issues or sections of the paper at all (Several interviews). This was caused by the government's currency control system that regulated the amount of dollars circulating in the country in order to protect the Venezuelan economy. However, this also enabled the granting of more dollars to certain companies. Other severe problems for the newspapers were a lack of advertisers (Several interviews). However, some print media, radio and television outlets received valuable advertising income from the government.

Government spending on propaganda is an example of a clientelistic relationship between the media and politicians (Guerrero 2014; O'Donnell 2007; Waisbord 2014, 31). In many Latin American countries governmental propaganda is an important source of income for many media outlets, especially those close to power (Waisbord 2014). In Venezuela the Ministry of Communication and Information spent up to 64 percent of its budget of 2012 on government propaganda. However, 2012 was an election year, so that is one reason why financing based on government advertising ballooned. The money was distributed to informative campaigns, other support for regional public communication and the positioning of the political communication of the state internationally, the optimization of the distribution of the presidential agenda, the production of special programs for the president, the optimization of special transmissions and state channels. Of all the money handed out VTV received the most (32 % in 2013). Even though community and alternative media are one of the key areas in the government agenda they do not receive large amounts of money. For example, in 2013 they received only two percent of the Ministry's budget (Vásquez 2014).

Chávez's personal media strategy

Chávez has been described as a skilful media user and his abilities to perform in the media have grown over the years (Tanner Hawkins 2003), which is typical of populist leaders (Mazzoleni 2008). Gott (2005, 23) cites ex Minister and ex Vice President Jose Vicente Rangel when describing the “por ahora” speech:

“[Chávez] knows that the word is much more powerful than the gun. He failed when he used the gun, and triumphed when he had access to the media. He spent ten years preparing a coup d’état that failed militarily; the single minute they allowed him to appear on television was enough to conquer the country.”

This implies that Chávez acknowledged the power of media already early on, even before his presidency.

The public support towards Chávez's media use derives from a lack of affection felt towards the mainstream media (Mayobre 2002). It has been said that Chávez uses the media to broaden his charismatic and populist appeal, to declare his politics and to mobilize supporters (Tanner Hawkins 2003; cf. Mazzoleni 2008). This approach however, does not take into account all the aspects of populism (discussed in chapter 3.2 where Laclau's theory of populism is introduced).

In addition to media policy and system changes, it may be said that Chávez also had a personal media strategy since he was often, sometimes even on a daily basis seen and heard on different mediums describing the government's actions and plans, or just simply singing or telling stories. His numerous media appearances were mainly enabled in two different ways. First, he had his own weekly television show, *Aló Presidente*. During his first years he tried different forms to approach citizens. First there was a daily newspaper called *Correo del Presidente*, which had information about the government's programs and it was distributed to the whole country. Simultaneously there was also a radio program called *Aló Presidente* where the president conducted live telephone conversations with different people, although in later broadcasts this became the president mostly talking to himself. There was also a television program called *Al Frente con Presidente*, which had a talk show style with a live audience. The guests in the studio came to ask for economic help or to describe the problems in their community and the president gave them an answer in front of a live audience. However, neither the broadcasting of this program nor the publishing of the paper lasted for long. (Interview no. 24.) *Aló Presidente* was the program that lasted until the last year of Chávez's presidency – after which President Maduro had a televised radio program *En contacto con Maduro* and the President of the Parliament Diosdado Cabello a television program called *Con el mazo dando*.

The second form was *cadenas*, which are similar to the personal television program style and which are nothing new in the history of Venezuela since

previous administrations have also used them. Cadenas have been criticized since they can be used as free advertisement on behalf of the government and because the opposition has to pay to get on air. Also the frequent airing of cadenas limits the options of citizens since they are broadcast simultaneously on every national television and radio channel, so that those who cannot afford cable television do not have the option to watch anything else. Cadenas may also be interpreted as indirect censorship as they prohibit the national audio-visual media transmitting their own programming. (Correa 2006, 18-21.) However, what was new during the presidency of Chávez was the volume of them. In fact, the Interamerican court on human rights also notified Venezuela about its excessive use of cadenas in 2001 and 2002. Before Chávez the president who most used cadenas was Rafael Caldera during his two separate terms in 1968-1973 and 1993-1998 and during those 10 years he was on air for 7800 minutes. (Oropeza 2009, 67.) Chávez broadcasted *cadenas* regularly and sometimes even on daily basis and also on prime time. They lasted for hours and the content was anything from signing governmental agreements to the opening of an agricultural school. Between 1999 and 2012 there were 2,377 cadena transmissions, which is approximately one every two days of his presidency (see table 1). The average transmission lasted about 46 minutes.

In addition to the two forms presented above, Chávez was also active in social media. He had his own blog, and Twitter and Facebook accounts. Especially during his later years he tweeted actively. His last Tweets were sent from Cuban hospital in February 2013 – just a less than a month before his death⁶².

In Latin America and other parts of the world politicians have moved away from direct contact between the voters and the politicians to media-centric approaches where the candidates are mass marketed by using images, celebrity and personality (Lawson & McCann 2005; Kirchheimer 1990; Panebianco 1988; Roberts 1995; Weyland 1999). The media-centric development in Venezuela is part of a global and regional change. For example, in Chile, Peru, and Brazil the politicians have adapted new technologies and strategies in their campaigns and moved away from the party and other organizational structures (Boas 2010). In this sense Chávez was just following a global and regional trend in his use of the media to address his voters and citizens. Moreover, the emphasis on television broadcasting can be understood in the light of the reaching out to his voters as the Chavistas' main medium was television (cf. Quiñones 2012). However, at least among the citizens, such frequent, excessive media appearances seemed to turn people against Chávez since not everyone was willing to watch cadenas that some-

⁶² Three Tweets were sent on February 18, 2013: 1) “Hemos llegado de nuevo a la Patria venezolana. Gracias Dios mío!! Gracias Pueblo amado!! Aquí continuaremos el tratamiento”. 2) Gracias a Fidel, a Raúl y toda Cuba!! Gracias a Venezuela por tanto amor!!”, 3) “Sigo aferrando a Cristo y confiado en mis médicos y enfermeras. Hasta la victoria siempre!! Viviremos y venceremos!!!”. (twitter.com/ChavezCandanga)

times lasted even more than nine hours⁶³. This may be one reason for the popularity of cable channels in Venezuela since many Venezuelans (42,6 %) prefer cable television over national television. Yet, not everyone can afford it, even though more than 66 percent in the lowest socio-economic class have cable. (Quiñones 2012.)

Table 1. Cadenas 1999-2012. (Source: *monitoreociudadano.org*)

Year	Number of cadenas	Minutes	Hours	Average length
1999	86	4.260	71	50
2000	146	6.540	109	45
2001	118	7.080	118	60
2002	159	4.680	78	29
2003	198	10.080	168	51
2004	374	7.440	124	20
2005	215	6.540	109	30
2006	182	5.520	92	30
2007	163	7.440	124	46
2008	187	10.380	173	56
2009	141	8.360	141	60
2010	136	1.680	28	12
2011	158	12.190	203,17	77
2012 ⁶⁴	114	9.383	156,38	82
TOTAL	2377	101.573	1694,55	46

The “media war”

The clash between the government’s media policies and the interests of the private media have often been described as a “media war”⁶⁵. Some of its features are constant attacks on the state and private media using rhetoric, economic sanctions and the rule of law. For example, Chávez himself has said that:

“I ask the president of CONATEL to apply a firm hand to regulate the media (...) It is not possible to continue tolerating the terrorism of the media, there should be a dossier opened on the media (...) A betrayer

⁶³ The president’s speech “Memoria y cuenta de 2011” in the National Assembly was broadcast on January 13, 2012 and it lasted for 9 hours and 23 minutes. (www.ultimasnoticias.com.ve; ethnographic notes)

⁶⁴ In 2013 Chávez was already sick in Cuba so he was not able to have cadenas.

⁶⁵ This is common rhetoric for the Venezuelan government since in addition to the “media war” there has been for example economic war and psychological war.

*of the fatherland cannot be the owner of a communication company.
(2.2.2008).⁶⁶*

(Bisbal 2009b, 39.)

And Minister Andrés Izarra stated that “our socialism needs communicational hegemony”⁶⁷ and “all the media must depend on the state as a public commodity”⁶⁸ (Bisbal 2009b, 43). The private media is not a bystander either since they have, for example, published manipulated images replacing a flower in Chávez’s hand with a gun (Gallino & Niemeyer 2003) and they have constantly called Chávez a dictator, tyrant, etc.

Hence, even though television is the main medium, i.e. the main source of information for many Venezuelans as stated above, it still does not have total credibility. Of the radical Chavistas, 66 percent believe everything that is said on the state channels; the percentage being 33 percent among moderate Chavistas, and less than 4 percent among moderate and extreme opposition sympathizers. Equally, 78 percent of the extreme opposition supporters and only less than five percent of the radical Chavistas trust all the information coming from the private media. (Quiñones 2012.) The numbers show the affect of the “media war”. It may also be considered indicative of the media problems that 49 percent of Venezuelans believe that there is censorship in the country. Only radical Chavistas believe that there is no censorship. Televen and Venevisión are seen as less biased television channels and they are preferred, especially among moderate Chavistas and persons who do not identify with either of the political sides. Thus, these television channels could have an important role in reaching out to potential voters on both sides of the political movement. (Quiñones 2012.)

Control and hegemony are some of the features often stated in texts about Venezuela. According to Bisbal (2009b, 25), the media and mass communication have been converted into an essential method of presenting the government and its projects and the image of the president.

Similar to López Maya (2011, 236; see chapter 2.1), Bisbal (2009b) thinks that Chávez’s administration centralized power. Bisbal (2009b, 36) calls the state a “controlling machine” that wants to monitor different aspects of life. Consequently, the media and journalists cannot be excluded from the political process because politics is formulated and directed by the government (Bisbal 2009b, 36). However, as we can see, these are not unequivocal issues since the hegemony of PSUV may be questioned within several community level organizations – as we have seen in the previous subchapter. Also the

⁶⁶ “Le pido al presidente de CONATEL que se aplique mano firme para regular los medios de comunicación (...) No se puede seguir tolerando el terrorismo en los medios, se les debe abrir un expediente a los medios (...) Un traidor a la patria no puede ser dueño de una empresa comunicacional (02 de febrero de 2008)”

⁶⁷ “Nuestro socialismo necesita una hegemonía comunicacional” (2007)

⁶⁸ “Todas las comunicaciones tienen que depender del Estado como bien público” (2007)

strengthening of control should be seen in the light of clientelism if even the government channel VTV does not follow laws⁶⁹. It has been said that since 1999 the use of state media has been transformed from a public service and educational role into political role that has the purpose of supporting the government and Chávez's action (Tanner Hawkins 2003). However, the role of the state media is more complex since many considered, for example, VTV to be a private media company before Chávez's era, which demonstrates that the state media field has experienced many changes (Several interviews; see chapter 6.1).

As discussed in the previous subchapter there are different kinds of approaches to Chavismo within the movement. This is something that is often forgotten in the analysis of Venezuelan situation; Chavistas are treated as a united block. The hard-liners and soft-liners of Chavismo have different kinds of views on creating parallel structures in different sectors of a society, including the state, economy, civil society and the media. The new and old structures are not only a source of conflict in themselves but different strands of the movement perceive their purposes in two different ways. The soft-liners consider the new parallel structures as complementary to the old while the hard-liners consider the old structures corrupt and inefficient and something that society needs to be rid off. (Ellner 2008, 166.) These different views and the structure of the parallel system have implications for the media sector, for example, in the function of the state and community media. How they are perceived will be discussed more closely in the analysis in chapter 6.

Some researchers criticize the private media. As mentioned above, they became powerful political actors during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. However, there are different views as to what happened to this power during Chávez's era and who actually had the power. For example, Hamecker (2003, 8) says that the private media are only used to show the opposition's side of the story and images are manipulated, producing "propaganda" against the democratically elected government and that they are even led by the opposition telling them what to do. However, it should be noted that in 2003 when Hamecker's analysis was published the media situation had escalated and become extremely polarized because of the coup and strike. Since then, most extreme cases of manipulation have disappeared.

Individual journalists found it difficult to work in this situation of heightened tension. Journalists stated four problems during the first years of Chávez's administration in the country: 1) journalists could leave some information out, present only their own perspective, sources may talk only to journalists that represent their own side and there was only a little investigative journalism; 2) the public conversation was affected by provocative and derogatory language; 3) open attacks and physical aggression, juridical and economic sanctions created an atmosphere where democratic dialogue was

⁶⁹ VTV has several violations of ley RESORTE (MPPTI 2007; personal communication with Cañizález in 2007).

restricted; 4) interpretations of the freedom of the press by the Chavistas and the opposition are different. (Tanner Hawkins 2003, 5-20.) Even though the research cited was conducted during the era when the situation was at its height, many of the themes are common to the later years of Chávez's presidency as well (See chapter 6.1).

In order to structure the conflict there have been many attempts to divide Chávez's administration into different eras. Delgado-Flores (2006) has divided Chávez's administration into four different periods. The first period, called the period of institutional communication, occurred in 1999 and 2000. During this period communication turned little by little from institutional to propaganda; Chávez had his first cadenas and in May 1999 he had his first *Aló Presidente* program on television and radio. During the second period 2001-2004 communication was already propaganda. The president was identified as the only national leader and above the state's institutions. Also logos, slogans, colors and messages were more unified. The years 2004 and 2005 were the time of juridical control centered on enforcing control of the freedom of expression. The strict Ley RESORTE was created and punishment for breaking the law was harsher. There was also an international aspect since Telesur was created, Venpres was changed to Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias (ABN), Internet sites were updated to meet international standards, and there was lobbying in the United States and Europe. The last period started in 2006 and is considered a period of "totalitarian control". (Delgado-Flores 2006.) This can be compared with other views (López Maya 2011) about the radicalization of politics after 2006.

This chapter has presented historical and political factors including the structures of Chavismo and the opposition and the media system in order to explain the formation of the conflict situation during Chávez's administration. The political system has evolved over time and some historical events, such as Caracazo and the coup of 2002, have left their mark on the collective memory of Venezuelans (more in chapter 6.2). Furthermore, the power of the private media as economic and political actors needs to be emphasized, especially before but also during Chávez's era. Chávez aimed to change the old system but not all the nation agreed with his measures. These factors are essential for understanding the overall situation. However, in order to structure the situation, a theoretical frame is needed, which will be introduced in the next chapter.

3 Theoretical concepts

As we can see from chapter 2, the formation and structure of the Venezuelan state and party system have evolved over time and included much friction regarding media involvement. In this chapter, important theoretical concepts – hegemony, power and democracy – that are closely connected to antagonism are explained from the media’s point of view.

3.1 Hegemony and power

The media are in an interesting place for creating hegemony since they may represent the state, civil society and the market. They may also be an important component in creating hegemony and power since the media have an important role in constructing the legitimacy of power (Kunelius & al. 2010, 11–22; see chapter 3.2).

3.1.1 GRAMSCIAN HEGEMONY VERSUS DOMINATION

The idea of Gramscian hegemony is important in the Venezuelan context because it is often stated that “the idea of hegemony as presented by Hugo Chávez’s government derives from Gramsci’s school of thought” (Cañizález 2014, 174). The nature of hegemony for Gramsci is power penetrating different areas of life. True hegemony cannot be achieved without including political, economic and cultural aspects otherwise it is just a form of domination and a form of control as implied by Cañizález (2014). Thus, in Gramscian hegemony different societal actors and institutions have a role in distributing hegemony. Therefore, according to Gramsci the organizational conditions of society need to be met, i.e. the organization of mediated, rather than direct, relationships between different actors (Sassoon 1980, 90). The media can play a role in the mediation since different powerholders may reach the masses through the media. Citizens have an important role in hegemony since, for example, through political parties they can have an official route to directly affect politics. In fact, a true proletarian revolution calls for the full, active and constant participation of the masses. This is the difference for example between Marxism and fascism where the leader of the party has an instrumental relationship with the masses of the party. (Sassoon 1980, 94–95.) In relation to the previous thought, Poulantzas (1978) remarks that the state, in a capitalist economy, may unite with a certain class in order to gain hegemony. This should not be mistaken for genuine cooperation though because the state does that only to further its own interests, thus, it has an instrumental relationship.

In the introduction I stated that the starting point of the research was Galtung’s model of society as an analytical tool. Dividing a society into three dif-

ferent actors is not so simple if we have the idea of hegemony in mind. The concept of a state is difficult to grasp since the state's activities reach into all areas of every day life and this is one of the reasons why there is no general theory of the state among Marxist classics (Poulantzas 1978). The state includes the spatial dimension of stretching across territory and a temporal dimension stretching into social and economic life that changes over time. However, the state also includes a diversity of different actors: agencies and departments on different levels, each having their own rules and resources. (Held 1989, 2.) This is also reflected in the interviews conducted for this study since the interviewees define the state in many ways depending on the context.

Moreover, the divide between the people and the state (as in Galtung's model) is also problematic since even Gramsci has two different ways of conceiving the state. First, there is the state, including the state apparatus and its institutions of repression and control, such as the military, police, courts and government. Second, there is the state which also includes civil society, which is an essential part of obtaining hegemony⁷⁰. It consists of individual actions that form the base of the political and cultural hegemony of the dominant classes. (Gramsci 1982, 122, 125.) However, with the distinction that civil society is not under the *direct* control of the state (cf. Pelczynski 1984; Keane 1988). Civil society actors may take part in different organizations and groups and, in this way, they form their collective and individual identities (cf. Haug 1987).

The third actor, the market, i.e. capital, is only a separate entity from the state in a capitalist system (Poulantzas 1978). This should be kept in mind when assessing Venezuela since Chávez stated clearly that his aim was socialism of the 21st century, thus the different entities of society were seen as not only connected but that they should even serve the Bolivarian revolution. In this sense in order to challenge the hegemony of the elite Chávez needed to break the hegemonic elite's economic and political ties. This changes our view of Galtung's model, which may be drafted with a capitalist system in mind. However, using Galtung's model as a base it is interesting to evaluate the relationship between the state and the market, which are dependent on each other. Also, it should be noted that the media are positioned closer to different actors – depending on the prevailing system – and this is therefore a more flexible concept in Galtung's model.

Stuart Hall (1987) developed the idea of Gramscian hegemony in the direction of cultural hegemony. In order to achieve hegemony, it is not enough to have coercive power, nor to master the economic field. Hegemony is neither ideology nor a controlling economy through which you could “move the rest of life”. As Hall points out:

⁷⁰ Gramsci's two different conceptions of a state have also been criticized since, in a narrow sense, the basis of the state is in the separation of the state and civil society but in a broader sense it is based on uniting the two elements in order to achieve hegemony (Koivisto & Uusitupa 1989, 77).

“The nature of power in the modern world is that it is also constructed in relation to political, moral, intellectual, cultural, ideological, sexual questions. The question of hegemony is always the question of a new cultural order.”

(Hall 1987, 20-21.)

In this sense the media are an essential part of creating hegemony because, in addition to informing the people, through entertainment they may create and maintain certain hegemonies by producing ideologies and ways of thinking, i.e. by setting the norm.

According to Gramsci each individual consists of different historical layers and has a common sense that may consist of different even contradictory tendencies. A person is simultaneously a part of the multiplicity of mass human groups and a composite of different layers of history, the principals of science and the intuitions of future philosophy (Gramsci 1979). In addition to this, Gramsci (1979) questioned the existence of objective reality.

However, whenever there is hegemony there are also counter-hegemonies. As Hall (1988) describes it counter-hegemonies or counter-cultures can be thought of as little pockets of a society that may grow bigger over time. The existence of counter-hegemonies is the basis of Laclau’s theory of populism (see chapter 3.2).

3.1.2 VALUES AND PASSIONS

For Gramsci (1979) ideology should be studied within the framework of hegemony and he suggested studying the forms of cultural organizations such as the school system and media – the parts of society that keep an ideology moving – and focusing on how they function in practice. This makes the current study Gramscian in a sense. In a theory presented by Haug (1987), it is critical that in the development of an ideological power “the development of a specific discursive sphere of “celestial” political, juridical, moral, religious, and similar ideas and values” are also included (Koivisto & Pietilä 1996/1997, 51-52). Therefore, there are ideological struggles between the ideological powers over ideas and values since, according to Kinder (1998), values, group dispositions and material self-interest are the basic building blocks that form public opinion. In fact, there is some evidence that predispositions and values in particular have an important role in the formation of political opinion, even more than material self-interest does (Brader & Valentino 2007). In this formation of political opinion, different political actors have a crucial role and the actors must position themselves “from below” for their ideas and values (Haug 1987, 94). This explains how different, conflicting actors within a society may claim the same values and ideas for themselves and claim to represent the true meaning of ideas. This can be compared to Mouffe’s (2005b) idea even though she talks about values in a different context. She notes that in a “neoliberal dogma, human rights are reduced to providing the

moral framework” (Mouffe 2005b, 54). Thus, they are no longer something to debate because they are beyond politics. They have gained a hegemonic role and are something that everyone should support whatever their political background. As Douzinas (2008) states:

“Social and political systems become hegemonic by turning their ideological priorities into universal principles and values. In the new world order, human rights are the perfect candidate for this role. Their core principles, interpreted negatively and economically, promote neoliberal capitalist domination.”

This does not need to be the case though. If they are formulated in another way they could target inequalities and indignities but when they are formulated as a question of supporters of justice and injustice, they lose their point (Douzinas 2008).

Since ideological values are not only produced by ideological power from above but also from below, it is interesting to study how different actors underneath the macro level conflict define and construct reality. This also places core values, such as human rights, in an interesting light if they are seen as the product of neoliberal hegemony – as Douzinas highlighted.

Where Gramsci talks about ideologies, Laclau and Mouffe discuss how the ideological becomes discourse (cf. Laclau & Mouffe 1985, 105, 109; Rehmann 2013, 189). For Laclau and Mouffe hegemony is the area where objectivity, which can never be pure but which contains traces of the excluded other and power, joins or collapses (Jones 2014, 19). The battle between hegemony and counter-hegemony is a battle of competing discourses because producing an opposing discourse to a prevailing power structure means making decisions, which are acts of power, exclusion and frontiers (Tambakaki 2014, 9).

Similarly, the political can be defined as pursuing power through conflicts which may prevail on many levels of society and in many forms. According to Mouffe (2000), there is always a formation of “us” and “them”. The crucial task is to deal with this issue, which always concerns the discrimination of one group in a pluralist democratic way. Confrontation should generate collective forms of identification that are able to mobilize political passions. If this does not exist, political passions do not have a democratic arena. Therefore, it is possible that non-negotiable moral values take over as mentioned above. (Mouffe 2005b.) Thus, a democratic process requires confrontation and conflict between ideas, interests and political positions but confrontation should be dealt with in an agonist, not antagonist, form and “them” should be treated as an adversary not an enemy.

Passions and values should be included in the political sphere because they help to keep citizens loyal to democratic politics (Jones 2014, 14). Politics can be understood as pursuing power through conflicts in order to run a society. The confrontation should generate collective forms of identification that are able to mobilize political passions. (Mouffe 2005b.) This is why pas-

sions are a central conception in Mouffe's theory of democracy. Passions shape the democratic practice because they aid the formation of political identity and this helps constitute political subjects and unite people (Tambakaki 2014, 6). For Mouffe (2005c) power and exclusion should not be erased from the democratic politics but they should be made visible and thus contestable. Jones (2014, 25) highlights the shift from constituting a universal moral consensus to looking at the process as political in Mouffe's theory. This process is the result of political construction and it includes acts of exclusion.

Like Mouffe, Hall (2005) defends the interconnectedness of passions and politics because if and only if the people care about an issue, can they become politically involved. They also need a vision to see how things should be done and the hope that it is possible to realize the process of attaining the vision – at least to some extent, because vision and caring come from the passion that motivates them. (Hall 2005.) Mouffe (2014, 157) talks about the mobilization of passions when she states that counter-hegemonic politics need to form a different set of desires in order to create “a collective will sustained by common affects able to challenge the existing order”.

3.1.3 MEDIA AND POWER

The media play multiple roles in society. Therefore, they contain many different aspects of power, allowing them to affect the focus and awareness of public attention as well as persuading people to adopt particular opinions and beliefs, thus influencing their behavior, structuring their perception of reality, giving information and conferring status and legitimacy (McQuail 2000, 69). Power is the most central process in a society because society is built according to different institutions and values. What is valued and what is institutionalized is a consequence of power relations. (Mouffe 2000.) The need to affect voters, their emotions and decisions, becomes important in a democratic system. But it is not only political parties and individual politicians that possess the need to influence – many interest groups, companies and minorities also strive to materialize their interests. These also include the agendas of the different media outlets and journalists.

There are different forms of power which can be connected to the societal actors identified in Galtung's model; economic power is possessed by the market, and social power by civil society. Yet, the role of the state and its connection to political power is problematic here, since there should be a separation of power, as in the ideal model represented by Montesquieu (Cohler et al. 1989), so that parliament would have legislative power, the government and ministries executive power and the courts judiciary power. In this model the media would have the element of being the fourth power

since the mass media have a special status provided by constitutional clauses on the freedom of information⁷¹ (Hamelink 1994).

The media's position in a society is diverse and flexible as portrayed in Galtung's model. The media have four dimensions – political, economic, socio-cultural and professional – in a modern media system and they form an internal struggle within the media system since the dimensions have different principles and objectives (Hallin & Mancini 2004; Voltmer 2013, 129). Depending on the dimension the media may have even contradictory expectations. The media may be functioning (the first two dimensions) on the powerholders side – either with them or as one of them, or absorbing the interests and logic of the dominant actors. However, institutions of power, especially the state, do not possess power because they are just institutions. Yet, because they are constructed by people and the relations between them, it may be seen that the state, for example, is a strategic site in which the dominant classes can favorably organize their relationship to the dominated classes (Poulantzas 1978, 148). The idea of power being attached to certain sites makes studying power relations more tangible. Moreover, it continues the idea that it is possible to see the market—one of the societal actors in Galtung's model – as a similar kind of site where different aspects of power are organized. In this scenario the media have a two-fold role. They may mediate between different sites of power but they also possess some power themselves as economic and societal actors as they have the power to grant publicity (cf. Kunelius & al. 2010, 32), which other actors wish to use.

As the media may also have parallel connections with the different sectors of a society, i.e. ideology, religion, the classes, and ethnicity (a socio-cultural dimension), they may be closely connected to the public sphere, i.e. to the civil society but at the same time civil society is closely or maybe even inseparably connected to the state (cf. Gramsci 1982, 122, 125). In addition, the focus of the media may be on the internal norms and practices that form a professional identity and set the standard for high-quality media production (the professional dimension). This is problematic in the sense that even though formal professional training is common, it is not a requirement in order to be a valued journalist. Thus, entry to the profession is not regulated. Yet, there is something that can be called journalistic professionalism, which is constructed from three different elements; namely autonomy, distinct professional norms and a public service orientation (Hallin & Mancini 2004, 33-37).

Based on this it is interesting to study what kind of role the media have in the formation of hegemony and counter-hegemonies since the media may be seen as a producer and co-actor in them. The media are messengers between political power and civil society, thus they have a role in creating the nation/people and rooting ideologies within a nation and people. However, the

⁷¹ Even though the role of fourth power has been given to other organizations as well, e.g. trade unions and new social movements (Nordenstreng 1997).

media also have their own interests and journalistic strategies, which are not often questioned and thus represent a global hegemony since the ideal of neutral professional journalism is well accepted all over the world among media professionals⁷² (Mancini 2000).

In chapter 2.2 it was discussed how the media and politics have inter-linked in Venezuela over time. Clientelistic relationships, different political ideologies and individual power interests have affected the structure of the media and society in general. Thus, it is impossible to make a distinction between roles and influences in society. And, because actual power may be difficult to detect, it is important to look for dominant discourses and since the world is defined according to some interests in every discourse, there is a constant battle between discourses in a society. This idea may be connected to the idea of hegemonic classes. A hegemonic class is able to realise its own interests – also as an interest of the subaltern classes and in this way create public interest. Thus, for Gramsci power is a constant balancing between the formation of consent and coercing. (Koivisto & Uusitupa 1989, 68-70.)

The study approaches the theme of power and hegemony from two different perspectives. First, from the perspective of media content (chapter 5) since media texts are the product of a power struggle, political, economic and civil society actors need the media but may also have power over them. The power may be perceived as institutional power in the sense that institutions are sites of power as Poulantzas described them. Even though, the media are not a united institution but include a variety of groups of different actors and editorial processes are constructed through social interaction where different actors consciously and unconsciously influence the decisions made, the media may be thought of as a site of power since it consists of people and the relationships between them, and therefore it is a strategic site for the dominant classes as they hope to influence other classes. Media texts are a product of this power struggle.

Second, the study approaches power and hegemony from the point of view of media actors themselves representing different economic, political and ideological positions (cf. Mancini & Hallin 2004; chapter 6). Each of these actors is an individual but they also represent not only their institution but also human groups (cf. Gramsci 1979; Marxist viewpoint by Curran & Gurewitsch 1977, 4-5 in Curran 2002, 198). Institutional power and the power of the dominant in society may be seen to constitute the Gramscian hegemony that masses take as given. Hegemony is the dominant ideology and it consists of the dominant discourses. However, an ideology is never a stable structure, but it could potentially disaggregate or be replaced by prevailing counter-hegemonies. Through these ideas of power, the media may be seen as “a site of contest between opposed social forces, in a context where there were both

⁷² Nevertheless, it should be remarked that even though the ideal exists globally, the practice may differ greatly between different cultures. In fact, it may even be questioned whether or not the ideal has been met in Anglo-American countries (Waisbord 2009, 205).

tensions within the power structure and sometimes organized opposition to it” (Curran 2002, 112). In this way the media may present the disagreements present in society. The variety of media actors from different levels potentially brings out these disagreements, which may not necessarily be explicitly present in the dominant public discourse. In addition, it should never be forgotten that the media as an established and recognized institution has its own interests and the power to pursue them, especially by defining the critical issues of disagreement and presenting their own points of view.

3.1.4 INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF THE MEDIA

The media may be seen as a power tool since even governments can be afraid of their power. They are able to raise threatening, unpleasant voices and criticize. Some suggest that television or broadcast media are more important in delivering information to citizens (Mainwaring & Scully 1995, 471) than traditional political parties. Without a doubt, political candidates can appeal to their voters more directly by using media and they do not need so much back-up support from party apparatuses (Ward 1993; Weyland 1998). Now with the “new” media this direct communication has become even easier. The media “have transformed the nature of visibility and the relationship between transparency and power” (Bisbal 2009b, 39). In this way the media have redefined the idea of public space. Therefore, the media can be seen as an important extension in the enacting of politics – and it may be said that the media are an actor that needs to be taken into account in political strategies (cf. Kunelius & al. 2010, 62).

There are some cultural aspects that need to be taken into account when talking about power and media in the Latin American context. It is not only the media that have the power to influence, the public also influences the media since it may be thought that the media reflect the surrounding society. Also since the private media are part of the market economy, financial interests dictate their actions. The economic and political elite has its say on media matters. And it may be concluded that the media systems reflect the political system in which they are formed and need to function, but that they also affect politics (cf. Hallin & Mancini 2004).

Politics and business may exercise their power to control the mass media. This may be called e.g. colonization (Bajomi-Lázár 2014) or media capture (Corneo 2003; Mungiu-Pippidi 2008; Petrova 2008). Hallin and Mancini (2004, 37) use the term media instrumentalization, which implies the phenomenon of outside actors seeking to control the media in order to intervene in politics. In instrumentalization “the mass media becomes part of the political struggle and the decision-making process because they reflect the often-contingent interests of groups, individual politicians, individual business persons, and so on”. These different groups may use the media to “intervene in the decision-making process, to reach specific goals at specific moments, or to support personal candidacies and alliances”. (Mancini 2012, 271.) In-

strumentalization does not aim for a socialization process where a well-informed and active citizen would be produced. It focuses on pushing specific goals and interests (Mancini 2012, 277). In instrumentalization there is no transparency. For example, everybody may know who the owners of the different mass media outlets are but there is no official information about it. This is something that happened during Maduro's term when several media outlets changed owners but at least for a while nobody seemed to know who the new owners were (Meza 2014). Because of this the audience does not have sufficient information to evaluate the interests and motives there are behind the news that a media outlet publishes. Moreover, this affects the credibility of the media and creates a "credibility vacuum" that surrounds the major social institutions. In addition to the lack of direct ownership of the media, instrumentalization also has other features, such as different forms of pressure put on journalists, including economic pressure, physical threats and other harassment. (Mancini 2012, 272-273.) All of these are widely reported in Venezuela by several NGOs (chapter 1).

Different forms of instrumentalization include the mass media as instruments of image building or destroying, extracting money from the state and the media as a tool for affecting decision-making processes. Especially during elections, the media may be used for image building or image ruining. However, it is possible that this is also a longer process. When this strategy occurs political competition is usually formed around individual competitors and parties that may be described as weak and volatile. In fact, instrumentalization is more likely to occur when personalized parties become important and there are no deep-rooted divisions in the society, but there are personal and clientelistic networks between citizens and politicians. (Mancini 2012, 273, 275.)

The media may also be used to obtain financial benefits. For example, by giving favourable news coverage to the government it is possible to get a share of the money set aside for advertisements to promote the state. Furthermore, a broadcasting licensing is an example of a decision that may be based on favorable news coverage. (Mancini 2012, 274.) As mentioned in the previous chapter, in many Latin American countries, government propaganda is an important source of revenue for media outlets (Waisbord 2014). This enables the media to be used as a tool for spreading favourable information about government projects because such media outlets may be reliant on such income. Moreover, as often stated by the adversaries (and even sympathizers of Chávez regarding the non-renewal of RCTV's license in 2007), one of the major reasons was the content of the programs, i.e. the television channel's critical attitude towards the government (Salojärvi 2008; several interviews). According to the instrumentalization theory these two measures of regulation – the government advertisement money and decisions about the media licences – may be interpreted as using the media as a tool.

According to research (Petrova 2008) higher social inequality is linked with lower media freedom, meaning that in countries where social inequality

prevails the rich may use the media as a tool to influence public opinion. Also other individuals or groups may, for example, use the mass media to steer the decision-making process towards their interests regarding legislation (Mancini 2012, 273). As stated in the introduction, Venezuela is socio-economically polarized country, and not only that, the private mass media are largely owned by an economic elite (see chapter 2.2). This provides excellent opportunities to the economic elite if they wish to try to steer the public opinion by using the media they own. Thus, instrumentalization prevails in societies where there is a lack of interest in public issues or organizing for social causes because, for example, individual self-interest increases and the public interest is overcome by particularistic and clientelistic interests (Mancini 2012, 275).

However, instrumentalization should be distinguished from political parallelism as Mancini (2012) points out since these are two different phenomena – even though they may overlap in the same society. Instrumentalization functions in a discursive vacuum, but in political parallelism there is a public arena for “the expression and the negotiation of the different points of view” (Mancini 2012, 272). Nowadays party parallelism has almost completely disappeared but the roots of political parallelism remain (Mancini 2012). Party parallelism has existed in many societies since it was commonly acknowledged that the media were “closely linked to that of party organizations, loyalty to party goals and the partisanship of its readers” (Seymore-Ure 1974, 173). The party and the media in this system have three types of links; 1) ownership, or direct or indirect economic subsidies and different forms of control; 2) the goals of the media overlap with the party’s interests; and 3) a political party’s media announcements are mostly consumed by supporters of that party. This party parallelism is more likely to prevail the more a party identifies with an ideology (Seymore-Ure 1974, 160-176).

As press designed to support a political party has more or less disappeared the concept of political parallelism is appropriate for this study since the structural links between the media and party organizations rarely exist anymore. However, the media sympathize with different ideological, political and cultural views, and this bias may be detected in the selection and the treatment of news content. Thus, even though there are no structural ties with parties or party coalitions, the alignment exists. (Mancini 2012, 266.) Since the number of media has increased the individual medium cannot or chooses not to compete for the mass audiences and instead focuses on its own “niche audience” that is identified by cultural, ideological or political orientation (Iyengar & Hahn 2009; Stroud 2011). As Mancini (2012, 267) points out this is often connected to pre-existing conditions. For example, regarding the newspaper *Tal Cual*, it was founded by Teodoro Petkoff to oppose Chávez. Thus, it was aimed at a certain kind of audience as well.

In the Anglo-American model of journalism (Chalaby 1996), which is part of the dominant professional model of liberal journalism (Curran 1993; Hallin & Mancini 2004; Waisbord 2000), the neutral mass media mediate be-

tween government and citizens. In this model of liberal journalism, news outlets are usually distinguished by internal pluralism – according to which the different groups and voices of a society must be heard (Klimkiewicz 2009; 2010) – and in this way the media outlet strives for neutrality. However, journalism in Latin America has the tendency to stress opinions and commentary, and the media may publish or broadcast with distinct political or ideological views. Moreover, Hallin & Papathanassopoulos (2002) found that in the Latin American countries they studied, the media tend to be controlled by private interests, including prevailing political alliances that have ambitions. Moreover, journalism in the region has not developed as an autonomous institution that contains a full range of professional values and practices. This is reflected in the lack of strong journalistic institutions for self-regulation and a high rate of corruption. The clientelistic pattern is an explanatory factor in this as clientelistic relationships have all played a key role in the social and political organizations in the region and also in the media. (Guerrero 2014; Hallin & Papathanassopoulos 2002.)

Political parallelism does not usually prevail in a model of liberal journalism that has a top-down model for distributing news and operates in a public sphere that favours external pluralism. In countries with political parallelism the media do not serve as mediators of information for citizens but are more likely to function by acting as intermediaries between the different elites of a society that have the same or similar levels of knowledge and information. (Mancini 2012, 267-268.) In this kind of public sphere different elite (groups) use the media as a forum for discussion within the decision-making process (Curran 1993, 31). The problem with external pluralism is that it does not provide a platform for integrating different points of view into the discussion, which may result in even further polarization (Mancini 2012, 269). This would certainly explain the Venezuelan situation, where the content of the media has been described as manipulative and aggressive against the opposing side. In Venezuela the situation of external pluralism has created the situation of a polarized mass media, especially for television. This is, in fact, a danger that lies in external pluralism since there is often no symbolic place where different points of view can discuss public issues (Mancini 2012, 276). As the citizens may rely on media that echo their own point-of-view, different views may separate from each other to the point that they become difficult to combine.

Thus, in political parallelism the journalists and media outlets do not have a neutral role but aim to participate in the general political and cultural debate. In this system the citizens have the possibility to read the news from the media, whose view they share, or if they choose, they can also read the news from other points of view and different sources. This is enabled by external pluralism. (Mancini 2012, 276.) Since, in this system, it is more or less transparent who stands for what – since different actors may be clear about their point of view – citizens have the opportunity to choose from which angle they receive information. In a system of instrumentalization, this is not possible

since the connections behind the media are made public. In a system of internal pluralism, citizens receive their news from a neutral stance but from one source. In Venezuela external pluralism seems to be the case since it is fairly common to have to read several newspapers in order to have a more complete view of the country's politics, economics and culture (personal communication). However, this requires a lot of effort and time, so it may be assumed that the majority of citizens do not do this, thus a part of the population is marginalized from the public sphere (cf. Mancini 2012, 276). However, according to statistics it seems that during times of political turmoil, the audience for television state channels increases (Weisbrot & Ruttenberg 2010), implying that citizens do want to check the government's point-of-view in addition to any private media point-of-view they normally watch.

So when is it instrumentalization and when is it political parallelism? On the one hand, it is said that political parallelism prevails when there are "more or less rooted articulations structured along the lines of general interpretations of society and its problems" (Mancini 2012 274). These articulations may be expressed through political, cultural and social organizations such as political parties, but also through non-profit organizations and other forms of association, which articulate views on general interest problems. On the other hand, there may be more or less random commitments about specific issues or persons that are expressed by economic or political pressures in order to have instrumentalization. The power holders are not able to build solid cultural and symbolic frameworks with the aim of constructing parallelism with the media. Thus, it might be said that in these countries the media do not have anything to parallel because the parties do not have a general vision of society and simultaneously the citizens do not have strong opinions about the public interest. (Mancini 2012, 274-275.) Also if the party system is not old usually the partisanship is also young in society, meaning that the parties are not rooted organizations and this enables instrumentalization (cf. Dalton 2010).

In fact, instrumentalization and political parallelism may prevail in the same societies as stated by Mancini (2012, 275-276). This is possible if there are strong political parties that enable political parallelism and if rational legal authority is poor and clientelistic practices are common. In these countries (especially those with the polarized pluralist model identified in Hallin and Mancini's media models (2004), partisanship has a strong tradition that has been transformed into weaker political parallelism. Because there is a deep-rooted tradition of political and social participation and a network of different organizations, political parallelism and external pluralism fashion the public sphere. However, at the same there is clientelism, where public resources are distributed according to particularistic ties, which makes it more likely to use the media as a tool to satisfy special interests outside of the legal and universal framework. (Mancini 2012, 276.)

As we have seen the question of instrumentalization and political parallelism is a complex one. Several different aspects may prevail in a society and

even overlap each other at the same time. For example, in Venezuela political and economic power-blocs may intertwine by pressuring journalists or using different tactics to gain favorable news reporting, which is typical of instrumentalization. Simultaneously external pluralism makes different media take a clear stance, which is close to political parallelism. This raises questions about power because there is a web of power relationships that are entangled around the issue of who uses power, what kind of power and where and how it affects people is an interesting. It is also impossible to answer it extensively. However, it is possible to look at the theme from more exclusive points of view such as how these questions of power are reflected in media content (chapter 5) and how media actors construct the situation (chapter 6).

3.1.5 PROFESSIONAL DIMENSION OF JOURNALISTS

If all the powerful actors in a society are trying to use the media and as the media outlets themselves may be political and economic actors, there is one relevant question to ask: who do media professionals and other actors represent? Hallin & Mancini's (2004) professional dimension is central to this. Moreover, it should be remembered that especially in Latin America – where journalism has not developed as an autonomous institution with a certain set of professional values – there are different ways to form a professional identity.

In a hegemonic scenario there are still powers outside of the main holder of power and they influence society as do several historical layers (Gramsci 1979) that also construct the situation and the way people are. Nieminen (2000) develops the modes of Williams (1958; 1962) and offers five different models to answer the question of which mode a journalist represents. They are: 1) an authoritarian mode; 2) a commercial mode; 3) a paternal mode that includes the informative–administrative type and the social responsibility type; 4) a democratic mode, which includes the representative and the participatory type; and finally 5) a postmodernist mode.

In the first, the authoritarian mode, there is no dialogue or the media do not mediate the information. They just deliver the information top–down and the journalists are collaborators or servants of the power holders. The second, the commercial mode, is basically the same as the first one except that the journalists serve the shareholders of the media outlets. However, there is feedback gathered from the audience but in the form of cash flow. Thus, in both of these modes there is a dominant power holder whose position is not questioned by journalists.

The third, the paternal mode, Nieminen (2000, 199-200) divides into two different types. In both of them there is the intention to have a two-way information flow since the media are trying to mediate between the state and the civil society. Both of the types also believe that a journalist is a professional if s/he is able to make objective representations of reality. However, in the informative–administrative type, journalists, even though they never ask

the audience, believe that they can offer objective information that serves the public interest. In the social responsibility type the journalist believes that she/he can adjust the information according to the audience, making it more accessible but still objective. However, in the case of Venezuela some media actors question the whole idea of objective journalism (chapter 6) (cf. political parallelism).

The fourth, the democratic mode differs from the previous ones in that the journalist is separated from the state and is on civil society's side of the societal structure. In this mode the journalist serves her audiences and their need for information. In the first representative type, the journalist has the role of representing her audience – the public. The journalist is active since her role is to initiate public debate and she also acts as a commentator and an expert. In the second participatory type, the journalist is just an ordinary member of the community that has the role of articulating collective experiences. In the fifth mode, the postmodern mode, the question of power is no longer relevant since the media function in a ritualistic or therapeutic role and they serve as a means for communal self-expression. Nevertheless, certain characteristics of Latin American media should be remembered; the media is a weakly autonomous institution affected by weak journalistic institutions of self-regulation and clientelism, which may affect the role an individual journalist takes.

Another way to look at the problem of media power is from the point of view of different media powers. Freedman (2014; 2015) introduces four paradigms of power in the media: consensus, chaos, control, and contradiction. Consensus refers to the notion of power in liberal democracies, where power is broadly distributed far and wide and constitutes a relatively stable social arrangement. According to the consensus view the media have the role of managing democracy by self-expressing, coordinating and creating social integration. However, this is a slightly outdated vision of the current scandal filled societies. (Freedman 2014, 16-19.) In Venezuela the media are not looking for a general consensus, instead they are directed to external pluralism.

Chaos refers to a situation where, especially through digital media, radical voices are allowed to disrupt the "old media logic". There is, in a sense, a "power pool" in society but digital media means these pools are leaking and allowing different kinds of voices to be heard. (Freedman 2014, 19-22; 2015.) This view may be compared to the view where the information is seen as power, thus the traditionally dominant actors in a society try to guard information. However, as technology advances this has become more and more difficult. It also affects to the position of journalists since they are no longer the only guardians of public information and that may transform their professional identity.

According to the control paradigm, there still is a dominant media bloc that steers public discussion and controls the voices of others in order to naturalize hegemonic discourse and steer the public sphere into a narrow and artificially maintained consensus (Freedman 2014, 22-25). According to this

view, individual journalists would serve the interests of mainstream media and would not serve the democratic function of providing a broad variety of information to a state's citizens.

The contradiction paradigm points out that even though the media field does possess power it is not immune to the voices circulating in the public sphere (Freedman 2014, 25-29; 2015). As Gramsci (1985, 93) states a "given socio-historical moment is never homogenous; on the contrary, it is rich in contradictions" meaning that a hegemony is never stable. Thus, individual journalists and other media actors would reflect the plural voices prevailing in society.

3.2 The people as the core of democracy and populism

Democracy is a highly disputed and ambiguous concept even though many agree that it is the best possible system of governance. The use of the concept has spread worldwide even to the extent that some countries or parties use it in their names in the hope they would make them (more) democratic. Democracy can be thought of as an idea, which societies aspire to (cf. Held 1996), or it may be something real, how real life societies have organized themselves (cf. Dahl 1971; 1989). The concept of democracy has evolved over time and societies. However, the people have always been at the core of any discussion. Over the years there have been several different models of democracy and they have varied according to who is considered to be the people, who is ruling and how have they been elected and the freedoms the democracy includes (Held 1996). In this research the focus is on the questions: Who are the people included and excluded? How are they excluded or included?

As already noted from the history of Venezuela (chapter 2.1) the idea of who is considered to be the people or who has been included in the political decision-making body has evolved depending on the political ideology and ethnicity and so on. This is where we come to the concept of populism. Even though populism may often have negative connotations, it does not have to be so. Populism was not born in isolation but is always connected to such concepts as "popular", the "people" and "democracy" (Houwen 2011, 5) since a common denominator for all theories of populism is the "appeal to the notion of 'the people' as ultimate source of legitimacy" (Canovan 2005, 80).

In this chapter the concept of democracy and the media's role in it are first focused on. One essential part of democracy is that the media are also able to function in non-democratic societies. Then the concept of populism is discussed. In Latin America there is a broad history of populist leaders and politics. Even in Venezuela the party *Acción Democrática* (AD) was often labelled populist during the Fourth Republic, and Chávez's rhetoric, policies and administration style are often connected to populism (e.g. Bisbal 2009a; Brading 2013; Hawkins 2010). Thus, populism needs to be taken into ac-

count because it forms part of political culture in the region and it is about the formation of the people (Laclau 2005a; 2005b).

3.2.1 DEMOCRACY

One of the main premises of democracy is that it strives for the public good (Dahl 1989). Without this the whole system of democracy would become pointless. Opinions about what this public good is and how it can be attained vary though. Voltmer (2013, 11) emphasizes democracy and a free media, and this needs to be examined with that context in mind because specific historical, cultural and political aspects affect the overall situation and interpretation.

Since democracy and its ideals have changed over time, it is relevant to ask: What makes a state a democracy? Whitehead (2002) uses the concept of ‘floating but anchored’ to describe it. The floating occurs over time and space since the historical, cultural and social context matters. Yet, the concept is anchored, meaning that there still is something that makes us recognize it as democracy. It is something that most societies see as an end-state, something to strive for or in a polyarchy, something to improve. Thus, most of all it is a process (see Dahl 1989, 5). A polyarchy is a society “highly inclusive and extensively open to public contestation” (Dahl 1971, 8). The majority of the countries, of course, are near-polyarchies; floating somewhere between closed hegemonies, comparative oligarchies, inclusive hegemonies and full polyarchies (Dahl 1971). Other important aspects of democracy are that it is not a static state but an evolving process (cf. Dahl 1989, 5; Voltmer 2013; Whitehead 2002). That also makes it difficult to grasp.

Whitehead (2010, 79) starts by dividing democracy into “liberal” and “republican” approaches. The Fourth Republic may have been described as a liberal democracy or representative democracy, which may also be the most familiar type of democracy to a contemporary Westerner. The idea that the state aims to represent the community or public as a whole is essential in liberal and liberal democratic traditions (Held 1989, 129). A paradox in liberal democracy is that it cannot be contestable that it is justified to establish limits to popular sovereignty by using liberty as an argument and ensuring that these limits are the framework for respecting human rights. They are also seen as non-negotiable. However, these human rights are defined by the current hegemony, and therefore they are an expression of hegemony and that is why they are also contestable. (Mouffe 2000, 4.) Liberal democracy has ended up being questioned in Latin America because many different groups in a liberal profession may end up competing against each other over partial and conflicting views on liberal democracy (Whitehead 2010, 80). For example, journalists may emphasize different aspects of liberal democracy to those held by economists, etc. This also makes liberal democracy an easy target for contesting, conflicting and even attacking.

At the same time republican democracy contains similarly different sub-groups from history. Whitehead (2010, 80) argues that the most visible strand of republicanism in Bolivarianism comes from the “more collectivist and Rousseau-inspired thread traceable through Spain to the French Revolution”. This would also explain the Bolivarian view that the oligarchic minority enforces liberal individualism and market privileges and that is why new constitutions are needed to enforce direct democracy. Republicans prefer to keep politics accountable to the collective public sphere instead of the liberal view of citizens as individual agents (Whitehead 2010, 81). For the republican model, the good of politics is about the creation of solidarity among the citizens (Benhabib 1996a, 6).

Republican democracy emphasizes civic virtue but more importantly the fragility of it. It divides society into three groups: the people, an aristocratic or oligarchic element and a monocratic or monarchical element, which is the leader who is trying to raise himself/herself above others and take power. This creates a divide between the few and the many. Therefore, republican democracy attempts to create a system that creates a balance between the interests of all the groups, so that all three will succeed together in achieving good for all (Dahl 1989, 25). In the Fourth Republic this was seen in the structure of state powers. There was a senate and the parliament, which became the National Assembly in the new constitution of 1999. However, for Whitehead (2010, 79-81), the two approaches of the liberal and republican models do not emerge from the theory, but from the experiences of the “kaleidoscopic experiments” of the content.

The Venezuelan democracy of the Fourth Republic may also be described as delegative democracy. Since most of the democratic theories focus on representative democracy in developed capitalist countries they do not address the issue of democracies that are not on a path to representative democracy. There are countries that are democracies in the sense that Dahl describes them as polyarchies – but instead of representative democracies they fit better with O'Donnell's definition of delegative democracy. The main argument in delegative democracy is that “whoever wins elections to the presidency is thereby entitled to govern as he or she sees fit” (O'Donnell 1994). In other words, the nation has trusted the president and therefore, s/he has the power to define the interests of the country and decide how to achieve them. This is also why the president becomes a paternal/maternal figure and the base of his/her support needs to be a movement. Thus, they typically present themselves as being above political parties and organized interests. The presidents of delegative democracy do not rely on party politics but they seek direct contact with the people. Delegative democracy emphasizes the majority and it is strongly individualistic since voters are expected to choose the individual who is the most capable in office. After the elections, the voters become passive but still supportive of their president's actions (O'Donnell 1994, 60). Because of this direct connection between the president and the people and the president's need to appeal to the people, this form of democracy may take

populist forms (Voltmer 2013, 99). In delegative democracy different institutions such as parties, the parliament and the media are usually free and also free to criticize (O'Donnell 1994, 61).

Chávez's era has many democratic definitions. From republican democracy it is a small step to the socialism of the 21st century and the election of a leader with a strong personal style since power is delegated to the strong leader who is seen to have a direct bond with "his people"⁷³. Yet, all forms of Latin American republicanism, according to Whitehead (2010, 81) prioritize social solidarity, and therefore, give the state the right to control the market. Chávez's democracy has also been called participatory, direct and socialist democracy among others.

The problem with interpreting Marx is that he has many ambiguities in his theory, which lead to a variety of possible interpretations (Held 1996, 150). As Held (1996, 151-153) points out, Marxist theory does not recognize other opinions of an individual or a group since "after the revolution, there is a marked danger that there can only be one genuine form of 'politics'; there is no longer any justified grounds for fundamental disagreement." Thus, Marx does not raise the question of how to maintain the liberal freedom to criticize and take action against a centralized state power (cf. Arendt 1963). Central to the liberal tradition is the idea that the human beings are individuals and able to take actively part in politics and not be just subject to another's power (Held 1996, 193). This emphasis on individuals has perhaps caused the loss of collectivism, which is one part of socialism. People do not represent just themselves but also the social and economic class they belong to and in this way they may have some common interests with their peers. In both forms, liberalism and socialism, the state has the right to declare and administer laws but the difference is that in socialism the state is wholly accountable to its citizens in all its actions (Held 1996, 141). Gramsci's view of politics differs from Marx since for him politics is an arena where different forces of power including the economy, society and culture have to be molded into particular forms of power and forms of domination, politics does not just reflect unified collective identities (Hall 1987).

A socialist system can be democratic if it fulfils some preconditions. It has to be decentralized and capable of dealing with "major economic problems with a fair degree of success" (Dahl 1971, 60). Dahl's reasoning behind this is that competitive politics leads to a pluralistic social order that leads to a decentralized economy. On the contrary, a highly centralized economy results in a centrally dominant social order that results in a hegemonic regime. (Dahl 1971, 60.) Furthermore, socialist democracy requires, for example, bureaucracy and the "ambiguous separation of politics from all technical-administrative matters" (Held 1996, 190-191).

⁷³ Whitehead (2010, 81) reminds us that this is called delegative democracy or *caesarismo democrático* in a Venezuelan context. However, there are many different forms of republicanism and they vary in their level of democracy.

Whitehead (2010) points out that in each democratic nation (of Latin America), different aspects of democracy are valued or devalued. Therefore, it can be said that

“[B]oth camps (liberals and ALBA community) appeal to some underlying notion of democratic legitimacy and popular sovereignty that are shared in principal; but in practice, each can plausibly accuse the other of insincerity and double standards, considering the undemocratic company they keep.”

(Whitehead 2010, 78.)

The question of democracy and power is an important one. As Mouffe (2000, 100) points out that “the more democratic a society is, the less power would be constitutive of social relations.” If we accept this deliberative approach, then the focus moves from eliminating power to the more important one: “How to constitute forms of power more compatible with democratic values?” (Mouffe 2000, 100). Therefore, in Mouffe’s view democratic politics should be transformed from antagonism to agonism. However, Dahl argues that the bigger the conflict between the government and the opposition the more difficult it is for them to tolerate each other (Dahl 1971, 15). Thus, the aim should be in transforming the antagonistic confrontation where you see the other as an enemy into an agonistic one where the opponent is an adversary (Mouffe 2000, 117). However, Mouffe does not state how this should be done.

The media may function equally under a dictatorship and in a democracy. As Whitehead (2010) points out, it should be kept in mind that many within the Venezuelan media supported the anti-democratic coup of 2002. Therefore, democracy is not in the nature of media itself, instead what is important is the quality of the media, which is what makes it an essential part of democracy (cf. Voltmer 2013, 23). Like democracy, democratic journalism may be seen as “floating but anchored” (Whitehead 2002). The core is a solid base but other aspects are fluid and open to debate and discussion.

Voltmer (2013, 111) emphasizes the fact that that “the main contribution of the media to democratic politics is their ability to mobilize citizens and to enhance their cognitive competences”. The power of the media is emphasized in unstable contexts since people deliberately look for information from the media during periods of turmoil (Loveless 2008). Actively seeking information in an unstable situation helps the people to gain a feeling of control and this gives them the ability to deal with insecurities and risks (Voltmer 2013, 113). And not only that, but according to Voltmer (2013, 60)

“[I]t is safe to say that without the mediation of politics and the circulation of political ideas through all segments of society, regardless of geography and social boundaries, mass participation and, ultimately, democracy would be impossible.”

In democracy the media are expected to carry some essential functions. They are expected to serve as a watchdog, provide information for citizens so they can make educated decisions, and the media should also provide a forum for discussion (cf. Voltmer 2013, 26). Voltmer (2013, 72-77) argues that during a democratization process the media play different kinds of roles during different stages because they are dependent on their political, economic and social environment.

3.2.2 THEORY OF POPULISM

The “people” as a notion has a twofold meaning. It is usually used as if it meant the whole population but still implies only a certain part of it. This is even more striking in populism. Torre (2010) points out that a debate over populism is actually a debate about democracy because in populism the people that were excluded from the political arena are now included in the political sphere. Ernesto Laclau (2005a; 2005b) takes the notion of the people as a core of his analysis and starts describing populism as arising from the people because they are the underdogs of a society that are lifted to the position of center-stage in populist politics. Also, no matter how charismatic the leader is, the basis of her/his position is due to the voters in a democratic society, hence politicians need to appeal to their audience.

Populism is often seen as something vague and difficult to grasp since it comes from the left and the right and common denominators can be difficult to identify. Some identifiers include vague rhetoric and charismatic leaders, who seem to appeal to the people for some reason or another. Ernesto Laclau (2005a), however, does not try to describe populism with all the nuances that it has had in the past. On the contrary, according to him, if you are too strict in defining the concept of populism, you may lose something essential. For Laclau populism is not only rhetoric or a political movement but a political logic and it describes something ontological about politics as it is (Laclau 2005a). One of the strengths of Laclau’s theory is that he sees populist aspects everywhere in politics and in this way we do not need to draw a straight line between populist and non-populist politics. However, Laclau has been also criticized for insisting populism can be seen in the way he describes above (e.g. Bowman 2007, 543-544), i.e. expanding the concept of populism to mean all politics (Arditi 2010)⁷⁴. Laclau (2012) has responded to some of these accusations.

For the needs of this research, Laclau’s theory does not do enough to explain populism and all its nuances. For example, regarding Venezuela we find that leftism or the socialism of 21st century was such an essential part of Chávez’s worldview that we cannot look at the situation without it. In fact, populism may be thought of as a ‘thin ideology’ that always needs a strong

⁷⁴ In addition to these Laclau has also been criticized for the misuse of psychoanalytical concepts (e.g. Glynnos & Stavrakakis 2004; Bush 2012; Perelló & Biglieri 2012).

ideology to accompany it and the function of populism is to bring an anti-elitist element to it (Stanley 2008).

The base of politics for Laclau (2005a) lies in the differences and equivalences of a society. The holders of the status quo face unfulfilled demands from the underdogs of society. Populism raises the importance of these underdogs because the populist leaders raise the underdog, the subaltern classes, to the centre of the political arena (Waisbord 2013, 4). Even though Laclau's theory emphasizes the role of the people in populism and leaders claim they win the elections because of their faithful voters, they also win because of the support of well-organized political organizations (Torre 2010, 171). Hence, the media may also be used to carry the messages of political parties and politicians.

However vague populism may seem, it has some common characteristics. Three preconditions of populism include, first, the existence of an internal antagonistic frontier, which isolates the people from actual power. Second, the isolated demands of the population emerge and an equivalential relationship is formed to connect them; thus, the idea of the people is constructed. Third, the uniting behind the demands of the populists, i.e. equivalential demands, develops beyond a feeling of vague solidarity and a system of signification is constructed (Laclau 2005a, 74). The gap between the underdogs and the political institutions is important to Laclau. That is why populism is also connected to democracy even though populism does not have to necessarily prevail in a democratic society. The isolated demands exist in every society and they can form an equivalential relation. The key is that they remain unfulfilled because otherwise they would cease to exist. Moreover, when equivalential demands form a system of signification, the formation of a social movement is about to emerge among the people. Nevertheless, in every society there are anti-status quo feelings. It is impossible to satisfy everyone. Therefore, one reason for populism to emerge is the failure to bind everyone into a stable social order within existing social and political institutions (Panizza 2005, 9). As unfulfilled demands increase, the popularity of populism keeps increasing.

Constructing the people and other signifiers

In populism the people are raised to the center-stage of a society. The silent or silenced part of the population becomes heard and noticed and they become a politically significant group. Therefore, populism may be seen as a way to construct the very unity of a group. However, the people do not consist of the whole population, even though it desires to be thought of as the only legitimate totality (Laclau 2005a, 81). This only "legitimate group" can be formed in many different ways. The people desire to feel that they are part of a unified movement and in order to strengthen this sentiment the population needs to be divided into two groups, the "us" and "them". This division is formed by using some pre-existing signifiers in order to maintain the antag-

onism. The enemy may be called for example the “regime,” the “oligarchy,” “imperialists,” and the “dominant group” and the oppressed underdog may be known as the “people,” the “nation” and the “silent majority”. (Laclau 2005a, 87.) This antagonism works in two ways: populists fashion their needed enemy, which helps to construct an identity among the people (Taggart 2000, 94). This sense of the “people” is formed by uniting against an enemy, which brings a feeling of cohesion. They know who they are not and this helps them to develop a sense of unity among themselves.

The “people”, the leader of populism, and the “enemies” are some examples of floating and empty signifiers. Laclau explains their formation by starting from the isolated demands that prevail in a population. These demands find each other and the equivalential relationship between them is formed. When one signifier rises to dominate the equivalential chain of demands and as the equivalential chain extends, the signifier ends up being more and more imprecise. This happens because its connection with the specific, original demands weakens. Laclau calls these nominators empty signifiers. (Laclau 2005a; 2005b, 39-40.) This is the reason for the often depicted vague rhetoric of populism. In order to harmonize a highly heterogeneous situation populist symbols are used. These can extend to the stage where the harmonizing function is crystallized in a pure name and the name (and the persona) of the leader becomes a strong symbol for populism (Laclau 2005b, 40).

The equivalential chain is not alone but it confronts rival equivalential chains, which interlink with some of the demands of the original chain. In this way, independent popular signifiers that differ from the original ones, are produced. The original chain is no longer unique nor independent from the equivalential articulation anymore. Its meaning becomes imprecise and alternates with the equivalential chains of alternative equivalential frontiers. These suspended signifiers are called floating signifiers. (Laclau 2005a, 131.) An example of a floating signifier was the use of Simón Bolívar in Chávez’s rhetoric. Bolívar has always been an important part of Venezuelan history and culture (see chapter 2.1) but Chávez made Bolívar an essential part of his politics. He named his political plan the Bolivarian Revolution and he also changed the name of the state to the Bolivarian Republic. No doubt, the original meaning of Simón Bolívar has changed to something new and different in Chávez’s speech.

The difference between the two signifiers – the empty and the floating one – is that the empty signifier needs an internal frontier to result from the equivalential chain and it is unable to reach any ultimate stability. The floating signifier results from the ambiguity, which is an essential part of all frontiers. The concepts are useful as an analytical tool even though they may overlap with each other. (Laclau 2005b, 43.)

Empty and floating signifiers explain the ambiguity of populist rhetoric. Moreover, they demonstrate that it is not rhetoric that seems vague but the vagueness of society that is reflected in speech. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish these two concepts from each other but eventually an empty sig-

nifier becomes a symbol of a variety of unfulfilled demands. They are crystalized in a single denominator, which attempts to represent them all and that is why it becomes ambiguous. A floating signifier is a symbol that could be interpreted in another way in a different context. Thus, these three concepts of the people, leader, and enemy may be called fairly common signifiers in populism. However, the people is a special signifier. It is a floating one but it is special in the sense that its existence is central to populism. The leader – in this case Hugo Chávez, the creator of Chavismo – is an empty signifier that symbolizes and unifies the whole movement in rhetoric, images and other texts. The “enemy” for Chavismo is the opposition of Venezuela, which may also include other groups as there may be several different enemies, for example, cultural and ethnic in-group enemies (cf. Sakki & Pettersson 2015). Thus, these three concepts and their construction are looked at closer in this research in order to find out more about their media presence, and the struggle over their representations (see chapter 5).

Latin American tradition of populist leaders

Populism has been part of Latin American politics for decades. The first wave began in the 1920s, but its golden age was during Juan Domingo Perón’s regime in Argentina and Getulio Vargas’ regime in Brazil in the 1940s and 1950s. Characteristic of this classical populism was the charisma of the leader and that the leader and the people formed a unity. (Arenas 2006.)

The neo-populist era started in the 1990s when Alberto Fujimori came to power in Peru. The characteristics of neopopulism are a strong anti-political trait, the weakness of institutional mechanisms with regard to the decisions made by leaders and a neoliberal political economic plan (Arenas 2006, 39). The support for neopopulism comes from alliances between emergent elites from very poor parts of the population. This excludes the industrial bourgeois and the organized working and middle classes, which provided the basis of the support for classical populism. (Torre 2010, 120.) One aspect of the neopopulist leaders is to be an outsider to the already existing political arena (Arenas 2006, 47-48).

Chávez shares some characteristics with both of the waves of populism. No doubt, Chávez has many similar features to the old populists like Perón. He came from the military, and from a normal, middle class family. He was very charismatic and also liked to confront American imperialism. (Arenas 2006, 40-41.) However, Chávez did not seem to be interested in social classes as such. With neopopulism he shared a support base with the poor and he was also an outsider to traditional politics.

A group of Latin American leftist leaders, including Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Rafael Correa in Ecuador and Evo Morales in Bolivia, abandoned neoliberal guidelines. Torre (2010) calls these leaders radical (left-wing nationalist) populists. This radical populism is highly characterized by nationalism and it includes implementing the “nationalist, statist and redistributive eco-

conomic policies of their classical-populist predecessors”. The leaders also say they will refound their nations and “establish radical participatory and direct democracy as alternatives to ‘decaying and corrupt’ liberal institutions”. (Torre 2010, 146.) The name radical populism comes from the tradition of Juan Perón and others because it shares some characteristics, like incorporating underprivileged sectors into the political system (Ellner 2001, 8).

Even though populism is identified with charismatic leaders, a historical analysis of populist leaders would, according to Panizza (2005), show that most of them were not especially charismatic nor tyrants. On the contrary, the leader functions as a signifier, as a symbol of harmonized people. People identify with the leader and not only through the stories the leader tells, but also through symbols other than words, like the leader’s own body and personal life. The narrative of populism includes varied myths, symbols, ideological themes and rational arguments, which tell the history, the present and the future of the people. (Panizza 2005, 19-20.) The media have the function of mediating, forming and molding the message. In fact, the media’s appearance is of major importance (Boomgarten & Vliegenhart 2007; Bos et al. 2010; Bos & van der Brug 2010; Bos et al. 2011; Mazzoleni 2003), which needs to be taken into account when studying populism.

The Bolivarian revolution in the light of populism

According to Panizza (2005), there are four conditions in which populism is more likely to prevail and become a dominant mode of identification. The first is that the social order is broken and among the people there is no confidence in the political system’s ability to revive it (Panizza 2005, 11-13). This is relevant in Venezuela since there had been dissatisfaction with the political order which escalated into the political action of 1989 (Caracazo) and 1992 (the coups attempts). These incidents and severe economic problems showed the state’s inability to deal with the nation’s problems. Chávez represented a new state with a new constitution.

Second, there may be depletion of political traditions and a loss of faith in political parties (Panizza 2005, 11-13). Because of the pact of Punto Fijo the people were dissatisfied with the situation. In fact, in 1996 Venezuelans’ opinion about their political parties and legislature placed the country near the bottom of all of Latin America (Arnold & Samuels 2011, 40). Chávez may have also appealed to the people because the “people” were excluded from elitist politics for such a long time and he represented a change to the old and corrupt party system.

Third, there may also be changes in a society in terms of the economy, culture or society itself. These may be, for example, urbanization, changes in the demographic balance or globalization. (Panizza 2005, 11-13.) As noted in chapter 2.1 Venezuelans opposed neoliberalism even though the second administration of Carlos Andres Pérez (1989-1993) started to implement neoliberal policies and Rafael Caldera (1994-1998) continued them (Ellner

2001, 8-11). Also a changed mentality towards leftist politics arose at the beginning of the 1990s, influencing the rise of the leftists. All these above mentioned themes were also brought out in the government's advertisement (see appendix 2), where Chávez is portrayed as a continuum of historical events. In the advertisements, the historical events mentioned and tied together, include the events of 1958, 1989, 1992 and 1999.

Finally, and most importantly, populist politics are also connected to the use of different forms of political representation elsewhere than in the traditional political institutions. (Panizza 2005, 11-13.) Chávez certainly took advantage of presenting forms of political representation outside of traditional political institutions by having his own television program and appearing frequently in the media, including social media. Also his rhetoric and appearance differed from the traditional political sphere and the use of audio-visual media proved to be excellent mediums for him (cf. Mazzoleni 2008).

If the social order is broken, people tend to look for an alternative to the current situation. Since people do not trust the current political system to make things better they look for an alternative from outside the prevailing system. This is also connected to the loss of faith in the former political parties, which are part of the system and may also be considered elitist. The changes in society accelerate the people's desire to look for an alternative, which in the Venezuelan case in the 1990s was Hugo Chávez Frias. Populist politics tend to use different mediums and different kinds of political representations than those which people are accustomed to. That is how they can be distinguished from the old political system and may even emphasize the impression of being an alternative and something different compared to the prevailing system.

Chávez's policies are also connected to his idea of democracy. According to Chávez Latin American representative democracy has failed because it always ends up being a democracy of the elites. His ideal of democracy was more participatory and protagonist. (Torre 2010, 149.) The idea of participatory democracy reflected Chávez's view of the role of the media. He emphasized the importance of alternative and community media, and wanted to give a voice to the people instead of "oligarchic" media corporations. This is also reflected in the advertising the government put together to show how Chávez was connected to the 12 years of democracy that he brought to the country (appendix 2). It is not so much a new system that Chávez wanted to create but a whole new Venezuela, which is why even the name of the country was changed (Torre 2010, 165).

In order to better understand the appeal of populism, communication between different societal actors needs to be discussed (cf. Torre 2010, 168). This is where the media come into picture. Because direct communication, especially between the leader and the people is rare, the media may serve as a means of communication while fulfilling their ideal role in a democracy.

Latin American perspective on the media in populism and populism in the media

Populists may benefit from the media greatly because the media broadcast their message to broader audience, media appearance, especially in the traditional media, increases their legitimacy (Biorcio 2003), the media bring out the populists' own themes (Boomgardien & Vliegenthart 2007) and the media may incite feelings of general dissatisfaction within society (Birenbaum & Villa 2003), enforcing the already existing anti-status quo feelings that are important in populism.

The media's attitude towards populists differs according to the newness of the populist movements (Stewart & al. 2003) and the media type, as the so-called yellow press may have developed a more embracing attitude towards populists than the traditional elite media (Herkman 2015; Mazzoleni 2003). The media may respond to the populist movement in different ways depending on the political and media context. For example, the media may limit the populists' media visibility or give them negative publicity (Horsfield & Stewart 2003). This certainly creates challenges to the populist movements but at the same time they may serve their cause by identifying the audience (cf. Zizek 1989) and it may also emphasize the prevailing antagonism in society (cf. Waisbord 2013). Yet, at the same time the media receive the needed slogans and bold headlines to attract an audience and the populists may bring difficult and abstract issues closer to an ordinary citizen by simplifying the abstract message.

Thus, the result of the interaction between the media and populists is not unequivocal. The influence of the media and politics on each other depends largely on which medium we are concentrating on and on which topic. The causal connection is often vague because even if the media would raise an issue in its headlines before the official decision-making process, it is possible that unofficial political actors and lobbyists can be found behind the raising of the issue (Kunelius & al., 2010). Moreover, the media affect the efficiency and legitimacy of political decision-making since they make it difficult to make compromises without losing one's dignity or face, and thus they radicalize the opposing stances of the power holders, making it more difficult to gain public acceptance for those decisions made by exposing defects and malpractices (cf. Marcinkowski 2014).

The "us" and "them" division of populism extends to the media as well. From the perspective of populist governments, news organizations and journalists either get behind the government or are against it. Also non-governmental media have embraced their role and have been at the forefront of the opposition to populist governments. (Waisbord 2011; 2013.) Here the media, especially the mainstream media, represent the elite. They have an elitist view and they support the old political elite. In fact, in Venezuela the private media are often called the "oligarchic media" by Chavistas.

Waisbord (2011) proposes that five tendencies can be found in the media policies of contemporary populism. First, populism sees the media and jour-

nalists as actors with an economic and political stance, and therefore, the media are divided into those who support the populist government and those who do not (Waisbord 2011, 100). The media are not seen as an independent actor striving to use its constitutional power to produce neutral information. On the contrary, it is impossible to cut the economic and political connections that they represent (cf. Marxist viewpoint by Curran & Gurewitsch 1977, 4-5 in Curran 2002, 198). However, the populist viewpoint tends to simplify these economic and political connections and simply draws the line between “our” media and “their” media (Waisbord 2011, 100).

Second, populist leaders often use their easy access to sympathetic media to criticize the opposing media (Waisbord 2011, 100). The easy access is guaranteed because the state may directly own television channels, radio stations or newspapers or fund them directly or indirectly through government advertisements. In Venezuela President Chávez used the television program *Aló Presidente* to spread his message while the government after Chávez also used the media in a similar way (see chapter 2.2). Direct communication with large audiences is used to bypass and challenge mainstream media, which is seen as biased (Kitzberger 2012). Direct presidential communication emphasizes their personal authority from the point of view of populism and helps to construct populist signifiers. However, they are not doing only that. As Kitzberger (2012) points out, they are also building a revolutionary counter-hegemony. The critique of the opposing media comes from the antagonistic divide in which opposition media are seen to represent foreign and oligarchic interests. The populist or national media favor national interests and strive for the “common good”. (Waisbord 2011, 101.)

However, this explanation disregards the leftist point of view, which may be incorporated through the idea of populism as a thin ideology (Stanley 2008). Kitzberger (2012) remarks that market reforms, such as expansion, concentration and commercialization in the 1990s, gave the media new social and political importance. These market reforms were part of the wider changes in societies, which reinforced social and political inequalities. The structure of the media system affects the structuring of “social distance” which is caused by an over-presence of the socio-economic elite’s interests and viewpoints. This is why the media became a potential issue for the left. Latin American leftist populist leaders intend to reveal the true nature of the media institutions. From the leftist perspective the media are powerful social actors, which have their connections to the upper classes, social elites and major corporations. (Kitzberger 2012.)

Third, media corporations in the region have dominated the media scene and they have also extended their interests outside the communication field to other key industries. That is why they have systematically defended market economics and conservative politics. This is also the reason why they have opposed populist governments. Populist governments have chosen to limit the power of selected media companies in order to democratize the media or (punish) companies, which are not concerned enough with the “peo-

ple". (Waisbord 2011, 101.) This does not seem so extraordinary if we keep in mind the results of Hallin & Papathanassopoulos (2002) mentioned earlier. The advocacy media have been prevalent in the region before. In Venezuela President Chávez often discussed democratizing the media. A part of the democratizing was not renewing the licenses of RCTV and several radio stations. Chávez also strengthened community media significantly. Yet, as Waisbord (2011, 102) points out, the aim of populist governments is not to attack all the private media companies but to confront certain ones and build alliances with some. These alliances can be made, for example, economically by targeting government advertisements in certain media outlets, which is quite a popular tactic among Latin American states (Fox & Waisbord 2002b, 2). From the leftist point of view the media are essential for maintaining the status quo, and the media's antipathy towards the government is seen as a sign of the resistance of the elite to the reforms of the government (Kitzberger 2012).

Fourth, populist presidents tend to strengthen state-controlled media networks under their watchful eye (Waisbord 2011, 102). Keeping the media under the control of the government is nothing new in Latin America (Fox & Waisbord 2002b). However, populist governments tend to do this with more aggression and in diverse ways (Waisbord 2011, 102). The leftist perspective to this is that the government is simply responding to the increase of the commercial media presence, which happened during the neoliberalist era of the 1990s. They are trying to rebalance the powers of the market, the state and civil society in the media. Government actions may be categorized into three groups: 1) policies creating state media, 2) actions to regulate the private media sector, and 3) policies strengthening community media. (Kitzberg 2012.)

The fifth tendency is that the populist governments tend to strengthen legislative regulatory power for controlling media content. This is often justified by a need to augment the social responsibility of the media. (Waisbord 2011, 103.) In Venezuela President Chávez initiated the law of social responsibility of television and radio (Ley RESORTE). However, in the process of framing the law many citizen groups were involved and they felt they could actually influence the final content (Interviews no. 23 & no. 28). Also it should be remembered that traditionally there have been only a few restrictions on commercial media in Latin America (Hallin & Papathanassopoulos 2002), so it may be easy to justify new laws. However, the wording of the RESORTE has been accused of being vague and open to different interpretations.

Despite all the tendencies mentioned it should be remembered that populism does not by itself create the antagonism and polarization of the media or society since a divided society already exists. As mentioned earlier, one of the preconditions for populism to rise is an antagonistic frontier (Laclau 2005a, 74). However, because of the reasons mentioned above, the media corporations have primarily attacked the populist governments in the region. This

has caused a pattern of one-sided news coverage. The private media say they are campaigning for the “freedom of expression,” which the government is trying to restrict and the populist governments have responded to it by saying that the companies are not really worried about the freedom of expression they are worried about their own business interests. (Waisbord 2011, 103.) This splits the parties into two camps and the antagonistic divide deepens. This may be compared to what was said about external pluralism in the previous chapter 3.1; that one of the problems in external pluralism is the lack of a common arena for discussions, which is why a situation may escalate. In Venezuela this division is easy to see and it is common knowledge to know to which side a media outlet is skewed. This implies that there was political parallelism in Venezuela rather than instrumentalization (cf. Mancini 2012). Yet, some media outlets, e.g. *Últimas Noticias* (Samet 2013; Interview no. 20 & no. 19), intend to report “both sides of the story” and walk a tight-rope in a difficult situation.

Populist leaders may use the media to bring out their message and personal charisma. They may also use other than traditional mainstream media for this such as direct communication through social media or their own media programs. This also has an indirect consequence on the content of the media since traditional journalists and media outlets may interpret it as an attack on their interests, profession, and professional values since it may seem that populists do not greatly value their profession. When they respond, the populist government tightens its grip on the media even more (Waisbord 2011) and the confrontation is ready.

Presenting the myth of Chávez in the media

Leaders labeled populists have been studied quite a lot especially from the perspective of political leadership, charisma and rhetoric (e.g. Albertazzi 2007; van der Brug & Mughan 2007; Jagers & Walgrave 2007; Niemi 2012; Pappas 2008). Chávez is no exception to this (e.g. Brading 2013; Valecillos Vázquez 2014). During his administration Chávez started to enforce his media’s democratization plan and also to use the media for his own personal promotion.

Media appearances function to form unity among the people. Chávez spoke directly to the people and with the people in his weekly television program *Alo Presidente*. He often had a live audience or was among citizens getting to know different institutions, etc. The media were a way to transmit his charisma and the idea of Chávez as an outsider to the elite. This also served as a way to construct an empty signifier, which could be seen in his physical appearance and personal life. He always wore something red which is the color of Chavistas and socialism. Most of the time he did not wear a suit (and if he did the tie was red) but military clothes or even a Venezuelan flag wind-breaker, which symbolized nationalism and his military background as a revolutionist. He also used the colloquial language of most people and strong

body language. The media, especially television, are the best way to send an image to the people and through the media, Chávez could enforce the myth and restate the populist narrative, including the empty and floating signifiers. Certain symbols are almost always present when Chávez is presented in pictures. These are an image, usually a painting, of Simón Bolívar in the background and a Venezuelan flag, implying nationalism.

Chávez's media policy served his overall general politics. Strengthening community media was part of Chávez's idea of giving a voice to the people, and therefore also forming cohesion in the population. This can be compared to the organizational structure of Chavismo where community councils were formed and answered directly to Chávez, not the PSUV. Similarly, Chávez had the traditional state media and a separate system of citizen level projects (community media, citizen groups and PNI system). The RCTV case can be seen as demonizing part of the nation since it was called an oligarchic media in Chávez's rhetoric.

For Chávez the function of the media was to serve the interests of the nation, and since the private media did not do this⁷⁵ they were part of the oligarchy. Like Chávez himself said: "The means of communication must combine their interests with the interests of the fatherland. They must not be instruments of social decay"⁷⁶ (MINCI 26.5.2007).

Formation of collective memory in the Chávez era

Chávez's view of Venezuelan history differed sharply, even from many of the Venezuelan leftists. He condemned the party-based democracy of 1945-1948 and 1958-1998, and labeled the overthrow of Marcos Pérez Jiménez in 1958 as a "popular insurrection" instead of a military coup (Ellner 2008, 6). Ellner (2008, 6) points out that this interpretation of history helped Chavistas justify Chávez's coup attempt in 1992. Chávez's view on history differed from traditional history texts and he also promoted certain historical events and people in order to change the general public's view of Venezuelan history. His government renamed many squares, streets, and even medical clinics after the martyrs of the Fourth Republic, and the state media made references to these historical incidents (Ellner 2008, 56-57). In this way, Chávez's government wanted to change public awareness and the collective memory of the era.

History is an essential tool for explaining the present and this is also the case in Venezuela. There are many different concepts such as prosthetic memory (Landsberg 2009), historical memory (Brüggemann & Kasekamp 2008) and collective memory (Kansteiner 2002; Zelizer 1995) and these different concepts may be understood in different ways in different studies.

⁷⁵ The coup of 2002 being an example of this.

⁷⁶ Medios de comunicación deben conjugarse con los intereses de la Patria. No deben ser instrumentos para las podredumbre social.

Here the concept of collective memory is used since I follow mostly Zelizer's ideas. Collective memory is the result of the recollections of a group and identity formation, power and authority, cultural norms and social interaction – they all play a role in remembering (Zelizer 1995, 214). Also it has been suggested that collective memory is constructed out of three different factors: 1) intellectual and cultural traditions that fashion our representations of the past; 2) memory makers that selectively adopt and manipulate intellectual and cultural traditions; and 3) memory consumers that use their own interests to use, ignore or transform traditions. Thus, collective memory has always been a mediated nature. (Kansteiner 2002, 180.)

Coser (1992, 367) points out that there are “as many collective memories as there are groups and institutions in a society”. Even though it is the individuals who remember they are still part of families, companies, associations, etc. and they draw on that context (Coser 1992, 367). This way remembering can be thought of as part of the power struggle and it has an important role in the formation of hegemony. Thus, memory work can be thought of as something political (Zelizer 1995, 228) and for example professors, different media and publishing professionals but also politicians are engaged in memory work (cf. Tamm 2008, 502) as memory makers. This political aspect of collective memory was well demonstrated during Chávez's era as he promoted certain historical characters and renamed streets and parks to honour them (see chapter 2.1). Chavismo was constantly changing the collective memory of Venezuelans, which had been dominated by the hegemony of Venezuelan exceptionalism. Thus, collective memory formation is something political and it has also been studied in the populist political context (see Mols & Jetten 2014).

Even though some (e.g. Vansina 1965 in Zelizer 1995, 216) have believed that memory reflects an authentic version of the past, the idea, that it is constructed by rearranging and selecting details of the past, may be closer to reality. Such issues as historical accuracy and authenticity may be less important than the establishment of social identity, authority, solidarity and political affiliation. In fact, as individual memories may fade over time, collective memories may become more powerful and develop new nuances. (Zelizer 1995, 217.) Moreover, it should be remembered that in the formation of collective memory a personal experience of a certain event is not necessary for the formation of the collective memory, which may result from mediated experiences and narratives (Landsberg 2009, 222; see also Brockmeier 2002; Wertsch 1997; 2008). In fact, narratives may be seen as one of the most influential shapers of memory (Tamm 2008).

In this formation of narratives and collective memory the media also play a role and maybe an essential one (cf. Zelizer 2014)⁷⁷. Different journalistic

⁷⁷ As Kansteiner (2002, 194) phrases Marssolek & von Saldern (1999 (eds.) *Radiozeiten: Herrschaft, Alltag, Gesellschaft (1924-1960)*. Potsdam: Verlag für Berlin-Brandenburg) radio audiences “regularly forget the source of their memories of historical events; they recall the stories but they have no

practices make it possible to make connections between the present and the past, such as investigations of different so-called historical events and comparing the present and the past (Zelizer 2008, 84). Also framing (cf. chapter 3.1) may be a form of the making of a collective memory if certain events are put together in order to explain each other or to form a narrative. Assman (1993 in Tamm 2008, 502) notes that repetition and consistency are the two most important factors in the construction of a nation's historical consciousness. The narratives are used to define boundaries between people who share a common past and those who do not (Seixas 2004, 6) and in this way construct identities as well. Thus, the media do not simply reflect the collective memory but are also involved in its construction and evolution (Anderson 2000). This way they also take part in the construction of a perceived unity that is important in the newly constructed societies that are still in the process of developing a political community (Brüggemann & Kasekamp 2008, 426) and thus collective identities.

Collective memories prevail on different levels and in different areas of life, such as among families, professions, political generations, ethnic and regional groups, social classes and nations. Thus, an individual always shares several mnemonic communities. (Kansteiner 2002, 188-189.) A shared collective memory is not irrelevant since it enforces cohesion within a group, promotes the sense of a common fate and plays a role in fashioning a group identity, i.e. values, beliefs and norms (e.g. Liu & Hilton 2005). Thus, as it shapes the person's worldview it "might be instrumental in articulating an ethical relation to the other or advancing egalitarian social values" (Landsberg 2009, 222). Therefore, a body of research (Condor 1996; Jetten & Hutchison 2011; Smeekes et al. 2011) has suggested that a group's social identity can be understood only by understanding the history of the group, where it comes from, and where it is planning to go in the future – some of the core questions in the research.

3.2.3 THE PEOPLE AND THE MEDIA

The people are the core of democracy and populism. Here in this study the term "the people" is used since its Spanish equivalent "*el pueblo*" was one of Chávez's principal themes. In his discourse Chávez linked the people with the nation and they were described as "young, vigorous, hard-working, noble, creative, conscientious, worthy, revolutionary, Bolivarian, and sovereign" (Lander 2005, 30-31). As the Chavista movement grew in the 1990s, the people were defined as an agent fighting against a corrupt oligarchy. In Latin America the notion of "*el pueblo*" has strong racial and socioeconomic connotations. This is also the case in Venezuela and Chavismo transformed it

conscious recollections of listening to them on the radio and often attach them to other sources, including television, textbooks, and relatives".

into a strong positive political identity. “*El pueblo*” for the Chavistas is a “masculine force of revolutionary, democratic change”. (Samet 2013, 529.)

The differences between most of the democratic theories is how they approach the individual rights and collective rights dimension (Christians & al. 2009). One essential part of democracy is the existence of autonomous agents who participate in society by forming their own opinions with the help of discussions with other individuals or groups of other individuals. However, it does not mean that every single individual should participate but the possibility needs to exist and there needs to be some kind of group of individuals who exercise their right to participate. (Whitehead 2002, 17.) Thus, the people is one of the key concepts in understanding and defining democracy; moreover, not only in democracy but also in populism. However, the people is not a homogeneous group, even though it is often treated that way. The people may be seen as a threat or in the case of populism as a resource, a marginalized group that is claiming its political rights. Also the people have political passions and if they are not able to find a democratic arena to express them, these passions may be hijacked by populist movements (Mouffe 2005b).

The ideal of democracy and how it functions in practice through inclusion and exclusion is still a constant fault line in contemporary democracies (Bernhagen 2009). The alliance of the state and the market keeps the masses, the people, out of the equation. Therefore, the demands of different minorities and the lower classes are a potential threat to the political and economic power elites. (Voltmer 2013, 162.) There is structural inequality inherent in the system used for building society. The economic elites have an advantageous position with which to influence political decision-making with their networking, lobbying and even possibilities to bribe, leading to the underrepresentation of the citizens in political decision-making. (Dahl 1971.) A weak state may look like a strong one at a first glance; however, if a state is not able to enforce its legislation and needs to use force or suppress the general public it does not have a strong democracy nor democratic institutions (Voltmer 2013, 135). Human rights are made to protect individuals from oppression. However, as already stated earlier (cf. Douzinas 2008; Mouffe 2005b; see chapter 3.1), human rights are a constant subject of debate and there is unresolved tension between the state, international actors and the rights of the individual.

In a global world some power has shifted from the states to the markets as multinational conglomerates and global financial markets are able to influence (democratically elected) governments, affecting their legitimacy and accountability (Voltmer 2013, 162). This is what Chávez was battling against. One of the tools and participants in this battle was the media. Chávez took advantage of the media strikingly well in his political activities. Through the media he not only passed on information about his politics but his image, including rhetoric and visual representation, was asserted. This all served to identify him among the people, his “*el pueblo*”. The emphasis on the com-

munity media served the function of giving a voice to the people instead of the oligarchies; the only source of real information for the people can be the people itself. This is again reinforcing cohesion within the nation. The commercial media were demonized and seen as representatives of oligarchic powers. The private media interpreted this as a threat to their freedom of expression and journalistic practices.

Thus, the question of the people is an essential but a complex one. Even though populism is connected to a weak democracy (Cammack 2000; Weyland 2004) because populism is more likely to prevail when there is a popular leader and democratic institutions are weak (Navia & Walker 2010), populist tendencies strengthen democracy by bringing a marginalized part of a nation's population into the central political arena.

Forming an identity is an essential part of the question of inclusion and exclusion. As Bisbal (2009a, 12) points out one of the things Chavismo did was that it reconstructed identities and everyday culture, bringing new and distinct values to them. Since an essential part of constructing identity is differentiating oneself from others, "identity politics is always and necessarily politics of the creation of difference" (Benhabib 1996a, 3). Thus, the us and them division is a part of identity politics but, as Benhabib (1996a, 4) points out, it becomes alarming when these identities can be maintained only by eliminating difference and otherness.

Using media technology it is possible to convert "private political and institutional processes into public sphere events" and in this way strengthen citizen belief in democratic processes, politics and the rule of law (Rodriguez 2011, 4).

The mainstream media's role in a society can be described as institutional. They have certain journalistic and democratic functions they perform and due to their institutional status they are often criticized as well. For example, Marxist theory criticizes the structure of the media because there is a tendency to move from state ownership to a private one, and according to the theory this implies that the bourgeois class rules the working-class (McQuail 2000, 78). Community media try to rise to the challenge because citizens use media technologies to broadcast programs and publish articles about subjects that matter to them and in a way that matters to them and in a dialect/language they understand best. Even though community media can be criticized for its small audiences, they are important in that people participate in them. As Gumucio Dagron (2007, 200-201) points out: is it better to have a radio program that reaches one million people or 100 radio programs that reach 10 000 people and have a tailored message suitable for each community's culture in their own language and told through a participatory process. This is not about opposing commercial media, its importance is in giving a forum to voicing people's concerns and thoughts, thus strengthening democracy (Gumucio Dagron 2007, 206). Atton (2002, 4) has similar reasons for favoring community media: they provide "the means for democratic communication to people who are normally excluded from media production".

In a conflict situation, community media's role is emphasized. Rodriguez (2011) noticed in her study that in a conflict situation the need for community media is not to offer journalistic coverage per se but to "focus on communication needs and daily realities of the people in their communities" (Rodriguez 2011, 233). In this way, community media keep reminding people about the normal life that still exists beyond the conflict. In Rodriguez's research she found that the main function of community media in her context was not journalistic coverage but having a communication space for cultural processes, the production of art and the reconstructing of community (Rodriguez 2011, 22, 253).

The theoretical framework of the research was introduced in this chapter. The process of conducting the research was challenging since there was no single theory that would have suited the data. Hegemony and the hegemonic battle over values provide a broad framework within which the political conflict of Venezuela is fought. As mentioned, there are two power blocs arguing at the macro level and creating antagonistic conflict. The media represent just one aspect of that society. The media arena itself may be thought of as a site of contest since the media can be seen as the mobilizers of citizens (cf. Kitzberger 2012, 133; Voltmer 2013, 111).

Therefore, it is evident that "the people" should be and are made the core of the study since they have an essential role in democracy, even though there are different interpretations of it. The emphasis is on individuals or collectives. According to Laclau (2005a), populism is a political logic that starts from the people. It concerns the construction of collective identities and the important role the media play in that construction.

4 Data and methodology

In this chapter the focus is on how and why these case studies were chosen and how they were analyzed. Methodology of the research has a broad framework of dramatism in the sense that both Goffman (1974) and Burke (1946) drew their inspiration on human action and asked questions based on it. Whereas Goffman concentrated on theatre and looked for clues to what would help interpret what was happening in the act, Burke took notice that human action does not limit itself only to the actions during the scene but what happened backstage was also important and affected the scene. In addition to these, quantitative content analysis is used to describe the newspaper content and visual rhetoric analysis to analyze the newspaper images. There is also an ethnographic touch to the research in the background since ethnographers aim to interpret the meaning of cultural practice and not to explain it (cf. Geertz 1973).

4.1 Newspaper data

The media in general is a broad field and it is impossible to extensively cover all areas of it. Also, different media contains different kinds of content and, therefore, different kinds of messages, images, connotations and denotations. Even the audience of different media varies and therefore the mediums are used differently. For the purposes of this research newspapers were selected for the closer content, frame, and visual rhetoric analysis.

4.1.1 SELECTION OF THE DATA

The media may seem to affect the public opinion. For example, by agenda-setting, priming and framing, and in this way use their power according to a body of communication research (Castells 2009: 157-158; Entman 2007; Scheufele & Tewksbury 2007.) Agenda-setting theory implies the media does not tell the public how to think but has more say in what to think about (Cohen 1970). In priming, the media sets the agenda by emphasizing some events by broadcasting them more frequently. This way, people get an image that these events are some kind of benchmarks and the events begin to affect their decision-making more. (Castells 2009, 157.) In framing, the media makes connections and interprets some events to form a part of a narrative in people's minds (Entman 2007, 164).

Entman (2007, 164) suggests that by including these three concepts of agenda-setting, priming, and framing under a concept of bias it would help us to understand the media's role as a distributor of power and this way reveal new views to critically assess political communication. Also, when the news is clearly bias the favoured quarters become more powerful and this

way have more freedom to do what they want without fearing the big public will punish them (Entman 2007, 170). However, there may be some other more discrete journalistic strategies to affect the public opinion, which also are studied in this research (see chapter 5.1). Here the focus is on the framing even though it may be said the newspaper data has been selected through a process of priming since specifically these cases were selected to the data on the basis of their visibility in the media. The analysis of the newspapers which is done by frame analysis tells us something about the narratives and connections that prevail in the media content and, thus, about the constructed discourses.

As mentioned in the introduction the media field is broad. For the purposes of this research, however, it was enough to focus on the “old” media and especially on the print media as an example since the study was about the power of established media and they were the ones closely connected to the “media war.” Since television is considered as the main medium in Venezuela, it would be interesting to compare television contents to the results of this study. However, within this research it was not possible to investigate television contents more closely for the practical reason of difficult access to television content from Finland and, most importantly, analyzing television content would have made the data limited compared to newspapers. Therefore, this research focuses on a content level only on print media and on national mainstream media in order to focus on the power of the “big” media. That is also the reason why the audiences were not the focus of the research. Only by focusing on the established media we can study the power relations. Focusing on the audiences would give answers to another set of questions. For example, how do the audiences perceive the political situation?

Taking into account the Internet and especially social media gives new perspective to individual journalists’ and citizens’ media consumption and constructing their identities. The Internet has enabled a fragmentation and individualization of the public sphere, making it possible to have a variety of voices accessible. This blurs the boundaries between national and global, and public and private. (Eide & Nikunen 2011, 12.) However, it should be remembered that even if everyone is able to speak up it does not mean all the voices would be rational and constructive (cf. Nikunen 2010). The mainstream media is able to filter these less-constructive voices, at least in theory, if they do not take part in the agitation. Thus, focusing on the mainstream media enables concentrating on the dominant voices.

Sartori (1989) suggests that newspapers offer a qualitatively different kind of information than television. Newspapers provide more complete and accurate information, and television offers sound bites and footages of politics (Barnhurst & Steele 1997). Pérez-Liñan (2002, 583) suggests that newspaper readers may have stronger partisan identities in Latin America than television viewers. However, television does raise political awareness even if it does not create party loyalties (Pérez-Liñan, 2002, 584). Also, as mentioned earlier (chapter 3.2), the print media especially has a strong impact on

democratic citizenship (Voltmer 2013, 111). In addition to this and described in more detail in chapter 2.2, newspapers were able to function fairly freely in Venezuela during the last years of Chávez's administration since many of the media laws did not affect them as they were directed towards audio-visual media. This is why newspaper articles were selected to the data.

In Venezuela there are several national newspapers, but the biggest of them are *Últimas Noticias*, *El Universal* and *El Nacional*. Of these three, the first two mentioned were selected to the final analysis because *Últimas Noticias* is the biggest one by its circulation and *El Universal* is one of the oldest and traditional mainstream print media. In addition to these, more marginal voices were needed in order to analyze the impact of different audiences to the newspaper content. That is why *Correo del Orinoco* and *Tal Cual* were selected.⁷⁸

Based on the theory of populism, three specific cases were needed to study the core signifiers of populism: the people, leader, and enemy. Three separate cases were chosen instead of one since this way it was possible to have cases that focused specifically on certain signifiers. That is why at the time of collecting the data, in 2011-2012, topics that were big and current at the time were selected. Thus, the first case study focuses on the people in the case of enabling law in December 2010; in the second case the leader is analyzed in the case of Chávez's cancer in June and July 2011; and, finally, in the third case study the enemy is studied in the case of the opposition's pre-elections (see chapter 5).

4.1.2 CONTENT AND FRAME ANALYSIS

Because of the large newspaper data, a specific method was needed to handle it. That is why the data was first analyzed by simple content analysis in order to describe main actors, topics, and the size and number of the articles in different newspaper sections (see appendix 3). The purpose was to quantify salient features in order to "make broader inferences about the processes and politics of representation" (Deacon & al. 2007, 119). By using content analysis it was possible to detect different actors and themes in the data, which would be useful in the next stage of analysis. Moreover, by counting the number of the articles and their sizes it was possible to note the importance and emphasis of each case to the newspapers. After the content analysis the data was analyzed qualitatively by frame analysis.

Frame analysis was chosen because it enables thoroughly examining the texts and finding similarities and differences without losing the bigger picture. The central idea of the method is to look for the frames of what and how something is spoken and written about in the researched topic (Välvirronen 1996, 19). Framing is a process where some of the aspects of experienced reality are chosen and then based on those a story is constructed that empha-

⁷⁸ More details about the newspapers in chapter 2.2

sizes the elements' connections. In this sense news do not differ that much from fairy tales (c.f. Tuchman 1978). Frames usually include four different functions. They define the problem, and include causal analysis, moral judgment, and promoting remedy (Entman 1993). All these were examined in the data to describe the frames. In each of the cases a certain aspect was focused on. Thus, the frame analysis was used to answer the question of how the people/leader/enemy is framed. In the third case, the enemy is understood from the point of view of Chavismo focusing on the opposition.

One of the premises of frame analysis is what we think is real and what is not. When an individual is facing an event he/she automatically connects it with already-existing knowledge and some clues provided by the scene, and this way explains the situation to her/himself. In this process there are some aspects that need to be taken into account. First, different people have different kinds of interests and this is why they consider different aspects of an event more important. (Goffman 1974, 2-9.) These different interests are caused by several elements but one thing that should be remembered is the importance of (personal) history that also Gramsci (1979) emphasizes.

Second, events do not happen in real life one after another but they overlap and several different things are actually happening at the same time (Goffman 1974, 2-9). However, people have a tendency to make sense of the situation by organizing them in their mind so they are connected and coherent to them.

Third, persons define periods of time differently (Goffman 1974, 2-9). This is connected to the fact that different persons interlink various aspects together. Finally, persons in different positions may form answers differently to a question, therefore those answers are always subjective (Goffman 1974, 2-9). Thus the context, including the personal history, class, and space of the person, matters. Framing requires always a decision about which phenomenon is framed. As a consequence, some elements of reality are always emphasized and some faded away. (cf. Entman 1993.) It is also important to note that frames also frame how some things are talked about and what is left outside of the frame. These aspects that are left out are as important as the ones included research-wise (Entman 1991, 7; 1993, 52-53; Tuchman 1978).

In media studies, framing can be divided into media frames and audience frames (De Vreese et al. 2001, 107). In media frames the focus is on the ways journalism and, specifically news media, represent and frame reality (e.g. Entman 1991; Herkman 2015; Semetko & Valkenburg 2000) and in the audience frames the focus is on how the audience receives and interprets the media (e.g. Domke & al. 1999; Valkenburg & al. 1999). In this study, the media frames are in the focus. For example, how the core populist concepts are framed in Venezuelan print media. That is why there is a need to look at various strategies, practices and techniques that the media uses to construct meanings and present certain aspects of reality by emphasizing or deemphasizing specific elements (Entman 1993, 53; Gitlin 1980, 7).

Some of the tools used for framing are metaphors, examples, phrases and slogans, describing, and visual images (Väliaverronen 1996, 111). In this data, examples, metaphors, slogans, reasons (background), consequences and moral statements were detected in the articles (see appendix 4). However, visual images were mostly absent in the frames since usually the picture did not include caption and the picture was shared with more than one text so it was not clear to which frame or even to which article the picture is specifically referring to. It is important to note that in the data many different frames were present in the same article and some even overlapped each other. This made including images to the frame analysis difficult. Yet, visual images are an essential part of journalism and that is why newspaper images were analyzed in a separate substudy by visual rhetoric analysis.

4.1.3 VISUAL RHETORIC ANALYSIS

Images are an essential part of storytelling in the news and this way form a part of the narrative emphasizing certain chosen elements of experienced reality like in frames (cf. Tuchman 1978). They may crystallize the message told in the text, bring something new to the subject, or they may be used to bring entertaining value to the story or engage the reader with the subject so he/she gets interested in reading the story. The reader sees the photographs as representing the story and, therefore, brings visual identity for them (Wright 2011).

It should be acknowledged that people present themselves to the camera the way they want to be perceived since they usually know they are being photographed. Especially, political leaders may be more skilled in presenting themselves in a favorable way. Photographs can be used as visual figures of speech in newspapers, including both metaphors and metonyms (Banks 2001).

“Visual metaphor can also involve a function of “transference,” transferring certain qualities from one sign to another... metonymy is a function which involves using one signified to stand for another signified which is directly related to it or closely associated with it in some way” (Chandler 1994, original italics).

Since visual rhetoric analysis focuses on metaphors and metonyms, it is cut out for a study of populism which is largely expressed by populist symbols, and empty and floating signifiers. Wright (2011) remarks that images may blur the divide between news and entertainment, and objectivity and narrativity since some images may become symbols and live a life of their own no matter how authentic they originally were. For visual rhetoric analysis it does not matter if the picture was actually staged or authentic, or if the situation where it was taken was made a spectacle of or happened spontaneously and was caught on camera.

Visual rhetoric analysis is closely related to semiotic analysis but the difference is it emphasizes the context. This way it was possible to incorporate the texts and the larger context into the analysis. The approach takes into consideration the broader social, cultural, and political aspects of visual representation (Wright 2011).

For the visual close reading, one picture from both of the extreme newspapers, *Correo del Orinoco* and *Tal Cual*, were selected. One represented a political leader and one represented other politicians. The focus was specifically on how populism is brought out in the newspaper images. The four pictures were chosen because the newspapers shared more or less pictures taken in similar settings and, focusing on these two newspapers, I would potentially get a wider contrast and thus would be able to detect the differences. The images were chosen from the case study 1, the people, because this way it was possible to concentrate on both parties of the political conflict. The first picture pair presents political leaders: in one President Chávez and in the other the opposition leader Capriles Radonski. This way different dynamics between the two were detected. In the second picture pair, images taken in the same setting of two PSUV politicians were chosen. This way it was possible to detect how some techniques such as angle and cropping affect the end result in addition to symbols and gestures. Moreover, since in populism the leader often functions as a signifier, by comparing the leader and other politicians it was possible to detect how populism is constructed in images.

4.2 Interview data

The interviews were used for two different purposes. First, they were used for the information they contained. Interviewing several experts of their field made it possible to gain information. For example, on Venezuelan history, certain details and links between different events that would be difficult to get from literature, a kind of quiet knowledge. Second, they were used to analyze their content and answer the research questions.

4.2.1 CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEWS

The interviews were conducted during three 2-3 month field trips in 2011 and 2012. The interviewees were selected mainly in a snowball form. First, there were a couple of connections who recommended interviewing someone and who then introduced me to the next interviewee. This way it was possible to present myself as trustworthy for the information they were willing to share and worth the time and effort they would spend. In the beginning I had a list of persons and organizations that would be ideal to interview, including all the major audiovisual and print media outlets and some specific persons and organizations representing academia or NGOs. During the field trips I did manage to cover almost all of them. There were some exceptions that, despite

all effort, we were not able to find a date that suited both of us, or some persons who were simply impossible to reach in spite of several phone calls to different numbers and many e-mails. However, I was able to have many unscheduled interviews that turned out to be extremely valuable to the study.

Venezuela is a vast country and there is no question the capital region represents only a small part of it. All the interviews were conducted in Caracas and the majority of the field trips were also based in Caracas. Thus, there is a need to research regional and local media as well. However, this current study was framed to focus on the major mainstream media. Moreover, Venezuela is still very much Caracas-centered. Like one of the interviewees points out in the news media, "If it does not happen in Caracas it is possible that the news are not published" (Interview no. 15).

All the interviewees' identities are kept confidential in order to protect some of them and that is also why the interviews' numbers have been changed in the citation. By keeping the identity of all the interviewees anonymous these certain persons are protected since they were afraid to lose their jobs or face other consequences because of what they said.

The aim was to cover the government and opposition side of the conflict as well as civil society, including men and women⁷⁹ equally. However, the gender balance is a bit skewed in the data⁸⁰. 62 percent of the interviewees are male and 38 percent female. Categorizing the interviews to pro-government, opposition, civil society (both pro- and anti-government) and neutral is not an easy task since there were, as an example, anti-government persons working in pro-government institutions. Also labeling people this way without going any further into their viewpoints is problematic as well. However, it is necessary to present some estimates of these ratios in order to understand the data. Therefore, a rough estimate is that pro-government and pro-opposition interviewees had an equal share of 35 percent in the data. These estimates are based on what the person stated is their political view in case the organization he/she represented conflicted with his/her personal views. Civil society actors had a share of 21 percent. 9 percent may be classi-

⁷⁹ I am very pleased and fortunate to have the possibility to interview widely-known actors on both sides of the conflict. Being a foreigner helped since it was not expected for me to take sides as eagerly as the locals. I always told the truth to the interviewees that my main ambition was to understand what was happening in Venezuela and by telling their opinion the interviewees would contribute to this worldview. Before going to Venezuela for the first field trip I was expecting to face some difficulties to get interviews. In 2007, while on a field trip conducting the previous research about the case of RCTV, I found it extremely difficult to interview the official side. RCTV provided all the possible papers and files and gave me interviews, but the official side refused to deliver any information which was not already in the Internet. This time it was almost the opposite. Many interviewees from the Chavista side wanted to talk. Especially in the grassroots and employer level they were extremely pleased that "finally" someone wanted to hear their side of the story.

⁸⁰ Also my position as a foreign female researcher affected the way some older male interviewees encountered me since they acted like they were superior to me. Interviewing women was sometimes empowering for them and once I even got comments about sisterhood: women supporting other women. Overall, it is possible that many women, especially younger ones, felt they could talk more freely to another woman.

fied as more or less neutral. This last group includes some freedom of expression organizations. I did not analyze the data within these groups but these numbers show the aim was to get equal share from both sides.

The interviewees ranged from 18-year-old journalism students to over 80-year-old people with significant careers in the media field. The specific ages of the interviewees were not asked though. Of the 34 interviews one was done by e-mail because of time constraint. The rest were all done by me and in person. 31 of the interviews were done on a one-on-one basis, but one was an interview of a larger group of students. There were 15 students present plus their teacher, but only 5 of them actively participated in the conversation. Once I interviewed two colleagues at the same time.

The interviews were conducted in several different places. Some of the interviewees I visited in their home, some I met in a café or another public place, and some in their workplace. This may have affected their interviews because outside of the office it is possible to talk more freely, but at the same time, there may be a lot of background noise, like in a restaurant. Also, on some occasions there were other persons, colleagues or friends listening.

The official interviews are semi-structured and they lasted between 30 minutes and 3 hours. Average length of all the interviews is one hour. I covered three general themes in all the interviews: democracy, journalistic work, and citizens. For a detailed pattern of the questions, see appendix 5. When I started the interviews I followed the question pattern but as I got familiar with the theme I started to have more conversation-like interviews, changing the order and form of the questions. Yet, I always made sure the three main themes were covered in every interview⁸¹.

The interviews were transcribed so that the transcriptions include the main ideas of the interviews and word-by-word transcriptions of the parts that were the most relevant for the study. Tones, pauses, and other interruptions were not transcribed since it was not useful for the analysis. About half of the interviewees were transcribed by me (17 interviews), and other interviews were transcribed by native Spanish-speaking assistants (15 interviews). A group interview of journalism students was not transcribed since it was used as background material and not included in the detailed analysis. One interview did not need to be transcribed since it was done via e-mail.

⁸¹ Being a white European woman was both an advantage and disadvantage. A foreigner was maybe seen less bias in the conflict. Some interviewees did try to test me after which they were willing to continue the interview. As a European I represented some things but being from Finland may have proven to be an advantage since the people who knew Finland knew it as a democratic country who has not taken sides in the Venezuelan conflict. By telling the interviewees I had already done my Master's thesis about the case of RCTV seemed to prove that I do know something about the issue. However, many interviewees still explained me detailed information about basic things just to make sure I know how Venezuela is. This way it is possible that I got more general level knowledge than detailed information. Also as a Finn I was socially more aloud to ask simple stupid or politically volatile questions, to ponder what really was happening in the country.

4.2.2 ARGUMENTATION ANALYSIS

A method that would describe the general outline but not go too deeply into the subject was needed since my goal was to make the different data “have conversation” with each other. The analysis was done in two parts. First, the bigger picture was looked at before moving on to the data in more detail. Antonio Gramsci’s (1979) starting point is that each social layer has its own reasoning which forms wildly-spread perception of life and human beings. This “common sense” is constantly evolving, enriching itself with new scientific concepts and philosophies. This way all people may be thought of as philosophers, in a way (Gramsci 1979, 34-35). Since I was interested in the story of people sharing their opinion about the situation, it was important to “hear” their main message. In order to find answers to the research questions, the interviews needed to be analyzed with a method that would offer details about the argumentation of the interviewees, but one not too meticulous so I wouldn’t get lost in the data. Kenneth Burke’s (1946) pentadic analysis seemed to suit the job the best. He developed a technique called dramatism (Burke 1946).

Burke formed a “pentad.” The pentad includes five questions that should be asked in order to find out the motive behind the action. The five points of interests are 1) act, 2) scene, 3) agent, 4) agency, and 5) purpose. (Burke 1946.) These five points represented five central questions – what, where, who, how and why – which are also familiar in journalism. Therefore, the questions posed to the data under each point are in detail:

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. <i>Act:</i> | What happened? What is the action? What is going on? |
| 2. <i>Scene:</i> | Where is the act happening? What is the background situation? |
| 3. <i>Agent:</i> | Who is involved in the action? What are their roles? |
| 4. <i>Agency:</i> | How do the agents act? By what means do they act? |
| 5. <i>Purpose:</i> | Why do the agents act? What do they want? |

The point was to know what the interviewee thinks is happening in Venezuela in relation to media and politics. By looking for the answers to Burke’s five questions, one is able to understand the action or the thought of the subject better, for example, his/her motive. Then the next step would have been to look at the relations of the five angles towards each other and this way find the dominant ones. However, the second part was not useful in my data. Already using the first part of the pentadic analysis it was possible to detect clear categories within the data.

After the pentadic analysis a closer argumentation analysis was performed to the interviews. This closer analysis was done by looking for certain key words, the main argument, the reasoning behind it, and (tacit) back-

ground presumptions that connect the main argument and reasoning (Kakkuri-Knuuttila & Halonen 1999). This way the main point under each category was detected without getting stuck in the details.

In this chapter it was explained how and why the specific data was chosen and how and why it was analyzed. The core of the analysis of both sets of data – the newspaper content and interviews – was to detect narratives and connections that prevail in the media and among the media actors and in this way detect the construction of prevailing discourses. In chapters 5 and 6 the data is analyzed using these methods.

5 Constructing populism in the media

In order to answer the main research question of the role of media in antagonism, two approaches were chosen focusing on different representations of power in the Venezuelan press and how they are constructed, legitimized and challenged by different power holders, and what discourses of political struggle there are among media actors. In this chapter we take a look at the first subquestion of the press by examining who gets their voice heard and how they do in newspapers. To have a comprehensive answer both the written texts and visual images need to be looked at. Moreover, in the context of Venezuela it is important to consider populism and how it affects the media's content. That is why empty and floating signifiers of Laclau's theory (2005a; 2005b; see chapter 3.2) of populism are so central to the analysis.

5.1 Constructing populist signifiers in print media texts

Three different news events were chosen for the case studies. In each of them construction of one of the core conceptions – i.e. floating and/or empty signifiers – was studied. In the first case of an enabling law in December 2010, the construction of the people is looked at. The second case focuses on President Chávez – the undisputable leader of Chavismo – in June/July 2011 when he announced that he had cancer. The third case takes a look at the “other” i.e. the enemy of Chavismo in the case study of the opposition's pre-elections in February 2012 when Venezuelans elected the candidates for the upcoming presidential and regional elections.

Table 2. *Number of articles per case study*

Newspaper	The people 11.–17.12.2010	Leader 30.6.–6.7.2011	Enemy 12.–18.2.2012
<i>Correo del Orinoco</i>	25	88	75
<i>Últimas Noticias</i>	26	52	97
<i>El Universal</i>	32	96	178
<i>Tal Cual</i>	23	44 ⁸²	81 ⁸³
Total	106	280	431

⁸² The articles of *Tal Cual* were collected between 30.6.-7.7.2011 because the newspaper was published during the weekend only once and on Tuesday July 5th it was not published at all.

⁸³ The articles of *Tal Cual* were collected between 13.-19.2. since on Sunday the newspaper was not published and on Saturday there was a two-day special issue.

In table 2 the number of all the articles in each case study are presented⁸⁴. In table 3 all the frames detected in each case are presented. There were strong and weak frames in the data. The strong frames were the ones that were complete in that they offered complete answers to the most essential elements looked for, including examples, background, consequences, and moral statements (see appendix 4; cf. Entman 1993). The weak frames were missing some aspects. In the text, all the frames detected are introduced first, after which common frames (emphasized in the table) are presented and discussed for each case.

Before going to each individual case study it is important to acknowledge there were some specific journalistic strategies that rose from the data. Even though research suggests there is the tendency of a pattern of one-sided news coverage in populism (Waisbord 2011), the ideal of neutral professional journalism can be seen in all of the newspapers. Even *Correo del Orinoco*, which was the most extreme newspaper, together with *Tal Cual*, reported on both sides of the story. It did have news, once even the whole spread, about the points of view of the opposition leaders. However, in addition to the volume of articles focusing on a certain political approach, the newspapers were able to convey statements by using some other techniques. These are specifically quotes, sarcasm, and layout, which demonstrate the power the editorial choices have.

Quotation marks were a commonly-used technique in the data. This has different implications. Usually it is the opposing side's comments that are presented in exact quotations, sometimes just one word. The technique enables the newspaper/journalist to write about the points of view of the opposing side and maintain the image of balanced news reporting yet still distinguish it from the editorial line. However, this quotation technique serves both ways: it is also useful for the political power holder, who is able to get his/hers discourse or phrases through in a newspaper that otherwise maybe would not present the opposing view so openly.

As mentioned earlier, Latin American journalism has a tendency to stress opinions and commentary, and the media may publish/broadcast distinct political views (see chapter 2.2). This gives room to sarcasm, which is used especially in *Tal Cual*. *Tal Cual* emphasizes opinion and commentary on its pages. Even the cover consists of small news headlines and usually the main piece is an editorial with a provoking cartoon. Also, a large amount of opinion articles enables more confrontational language⁸⁵. In addition to the editorials and opinion articles, sarcasm is shown in things like the subheadings.

⁸⁴ The articles were searched by looking for certain words in the newspapers. These were:

Case 1 – the people: *habilit(ante)*, *paquetazo*

Case 2 – leader: *cancer*, *salud*, *recupera(ción)*, *tratamiento*, *enferm(edad)*, *tumor*, *volv(er)*, *retorno*, *reposo*

Case 3 – enemy/other: *primar(ías)*, *elec(ciones/toral)*, *12F*, and *vot(acion/o)*.

⁸⁵ E.g. calling the Chavistas "chacumbelianos" in the case 1.

Other newspapers in the data have a different, less-confrontational style, but they still use sarcasm just a more discrete way.

Table 3. *Frames*

	<i>Correo del Orinoco (CdO)</i>	<i>Últimas Noticias (UN)</i>	<i>El Universal (Uni)</i>	<i>Tal Cual (TC)</i>
The People	1) Micro level power (Power to the people because we are everyone; everyone counts) 2) Passive people (The government helps and the people trust) 3) Discarded by the opposition (At least we know who to blame)	1) Active and smart (Plural nation) 2) Passive people (The shepherded people) 3) Discarded by the government (It is just theatre) 4) Unified nation (Unified politicians)	1) Active and smart (Active civil society; constitutional state) 2) Passive people (The victims) 3) Unified nation (The people and the government working together)	1) Active and smart (Our country; Venezuelans) 2) Discarded by the government (Chacumbelianos)
Leader	1) Human being (Human leader) 2) Strong leader (Strong and independent leader) 3) Popular leader 4) Supreme leader (The legend; leader=the nation; loved and loving leader) 5) Revolutionary leader	1) Human being 2) Strong leader 3) Popular leader 4) Cult figure 5) Political leader	1) Human being (Mortal man) 2) Strong leader 3) Supreme leader (One of the people) 4) Cult figure (Superman) 5) Authoritarian leader (Autocrat) 6) Weak leader (Under Cuba's thumb; failed leader)	1) Human being (Fragile human being) 2) Weak leader (A puppet of Castro) 3) Cult figure (Cult of personality) 4) Authoritarian leader (Autarch; secretive leader) 5) Revolutionary leader (Irreplaceable bellwether)
Enemy	1) Democracy (Finally they learn) 2) Bourgeois (The greedy ones never change) 3) Fragmented empty project	1) United (United; together with the people) 2) Democracy (Democrats who care about their country, Whiners) 3) Bourgeois (Extreme right)	1) United (Uniting opposition; any one of us) 2) Democracy 3) New future	1) United (The people is the opposition; unity) 2) Democracy (Democrats) 3) Bourgeois (Oligarchs)

Layout is also an important way to construct the stories. For example, after an article about the opposing side, there may be a bigger piece of news representing the newspaper's editorial line. The editorial line of the newspaper can be seen from what the majority of the texts are presenting. *Últimas Noticias* is the most interesting case in this sense. As mentioned, it is considered as one of the most balanced newspapers in the country (Samet 2013). Thus, it has pieces of news on both sides of the conflict. However, the construction of the page reveals a lot. The layout of a page of *Últimas Noticias*

consists usually of a large heading and under it there are up to six different smaller stories about the heading's subject. Even though the heading is suggesting a Chávez-minded approach, these smaller articles may be divided up to four in favor of the opposition.

5.1.1 CASE STUDY 1: THE PEOPLE

The events of the enabling law started when President Hugo Chávez asked the parliament to pass a law in mid December 2010 that allowed him to make decisions without parliament's approval in order to speed up the aid process to the people that suffered because of heavy rains. It was part of "packaging" several laws together at the end of the parliamentary term. The opposition objected the law because, according to them, it was a way to tie the hands of the forthcoming parliament that would start in January 2011, one that would, for the first time in years, include MPs of the opposition parties. In fact, the number of Chavistas in the new parliament did not exceed the needed two-thirds that was required for many decisions.

The case was chosen because it offered a good example of a debate over the government's perspective against the opposition's perspective in Venezuela. In addition to that, it involved a debate over who were the people addressed since the government justified the law by saying it was needed in order to help the people. Thus, the case was chosen to study how the "people" was constructed and addressed to in the newsreporting. The "people" may be considered as a core concept in populism (Canovan 2005); it is not just *any* floating signifier. Also, for Chávez, the people (*el pueblo*) was one of the most essential aspects in his politics (Lander 2005, 30-31). The argument over the enabling law lasted from December 2010 well into January 2011, but already within a week there was sufficient amount of articles for the data (table 2).

The data consists of 106 newspaper articles (table 2). There were also cartoons and several articles where the case was just mentioned by one phrase, but they were excluded from the data since the focus was on how the people were constructed within the context of the case study of the enabling law.

Correo del Orinoco

In *Correo del Orinoco*, the majority of the articles are quite large, extending from one whole page to even several pages (60 %). The importance of the topic is seen from the covers since the case ended up on the cover of the newspaper six days out of the seven. Also, the majority of the articles have a picture (40 %) or several pictures (44 %). The principal actor in the articles is, in most of cases, the government party politician, (44 %) but Chávez (16 %) and the people (20 %) were also present. (See appendix 3.)

The angle of the story varies a bit, and the angle of the cover is not always repeated in the actual article. The dominant angles in the stories are 1) politician explaining why the law is needed and that they are backing it or making

sure the content of the law is sufficient (36 %), 2) the people backing or in need of the law (16 %), 3) Chávez taking action for the wellbeing of the people (12 %), and 4) content of the law (12 %).

From the basis of this it is possible to see the topic is important because *Correo del Orinoco* dedicates a great deal of space for explaining why the law is needed and the contents of it. Politicians are presented as taking care of setting the law and justifying it while Chávez is already in the field taking action and confronting the refugees.

Correo del Orinoco mentions the people often so it was fairly easy to depict the frames. There were four strong ones. It was common the frames appeared even in the same article and they overlapped at times. Yet, they were distinct narratives constructed from the elements looked for (appendix 4). Next, the frames are briefly introduced.

Power to the people because we are everyone: In the frame the people have the power to help themselves and also need to supervise the officials so they are doing a good job in helping them. It is all about collective power: “The people came to stay forever.” The people are joined together by humanity, and by organizing themselves and working on a micro level they can make a difference.

Everyone counts: The frame is not a dominant one but still it may be considered strong and significant in interpreting leftist populism. It differs from the previous frame because individuals are emphasized instead of a vague collectivity. Chávez, for example, ate lunch with a couple of refugees or told that he had heard of a story of a certain lady and her baby, or “four heroines” died when they were helping the refugees and are mentioned by their names. Also, one interesting way to underline the importance of every individual is addressing the people by their gender and inventing a feminine form of nouns. This way even new words are invented into the Spanish language. In the text, both the feminine and the masculine forms are present. For example: *trabajadoras y trabajadores* (workers), *productoras y productores* (producers), *damnificadas y damnificados* (victims of a natural disaster), etc. It is highlighted that the individuals do not disappear in the masses but everyone counts, and it is taken under consideration that everyone has his/her own individual needs.

The government helps and the people trust: The frame could be thought of as something typical in a government-funded newspaper and therefore it might be thought of as a government frame. In it the government and the state are represented working hard to help the people in need and people are relieved to receive the aid they so desperately need. The state is taking care of its citizens who seem quite happy about the government’s actions but passive in the events. The state is seen as a big machine and the people are just one part of it. Also, in a midst of extraordinary climate events, the actions taken are shown as ordinary. It is the fourth time Chávez is asking for an enabling law and many presidents in the past have used it. It is just the best and the

fastest way to help the people, and not just to help them to survive, but with the aid of the revolution it is possible to give the people a new opportunity.

At least we know who to blame: The frame is about what could be called demonizing (cf. Taggart 2000). Many different parties are blamed for the events. These include, among others, out-group enemies of the USA, developed countries in general, and capitalism. Within the country, some of the in-group enemies named are the opposition, spokespersons of the right, bourgeois, the ones “who have a lot of time,” and cowards. In the background there is an accusation that a minority is discriminating a majority and certain persons are always against the people and “real” democracy. As a consequence the people suffer. If justice is done, these persons or institutions should be accountable for their actions. They also have a historical responsibility to make things right. Even the climate change, which caused the rains, is framed to be their fault. This frame serves the function of defining who the people are not.

The “people” identified in the articles refers mostly to the lower-economic classes living in the barrios. However, there is one hotel owner mentioned who is helping the refugees by giving them shelter in his hotel and who is now awaiting the help of the government since he cannot pay the salaries without paying customers. So, the “people” may be interpreted to include anyone who is working for the common good of the Bolivarian nation.

Because of the focus of the research on formation of the people, there were some alternative frames that were dismissed. They were 1) the enabling law is in accordance with the constitution of Venezuela, 2) economical aspects of the case, and 3) Good Samaritans help the ones in need. Soft stories about the drastic events and miserable fate of the people were not as common as one thought. However, this is probably due to the viewpoint of the research focusing on the enabling law. Most likely these stories are present in the stories that do not mention the law but are more about the heavy rains.

Últimas Noticias

The case of enabling law is on the cover of *Últimas Noticias* six times out of the seven days studied. This tells us the case is important to this newspaper. Since the front page of *Últimas Noticias* includes only the titles of the actual articles, they were not included in the closer analysis. The majority of the articles (85 %) were published in the politics and national news section called “El país.” There are a few opinion texts as well (12 %).

As mentioned before, *Últimas Noticias* is a newspaper that has both the government and opposition sympathizers among the staff and is trying to cover both views (Samet 2013; personal communication). This is seen in the content as well. It is also common that on the same page they have several smaller articles covering different points of view. For example, there can be a bigger story from the government’s point of view, a medium-sized story from the opposition’s viewpoint, and a smaller story of an expert’s opinion. How-

ever, the layout may have been a bit deceiving at times as previously discussed regarding journalistic strategies. This balancing between the two poles is also seen in the content analysis. The principal actors in the articles are the opposition (31 %), the parliament or the PSUV (27%) or Chávez (23 %). Other minor groups are experts (8 %), no actor (8%), and higher class (4 %).

The angles of the articles also present different views of the conflict. The most common one is the parliament or government dealing with the case (23 %), but to balance that view there are stories saying there must be an ulterior motive for the law (15 %) and that it is not just to help the affected but to get more control or for socialist reasons. As common as the pieces of news about the opposition being against the law (15 %) were, Chávez is presented asking for the law or defending it in 12 percent of the articles. Other minor topics are experts stating their opinion, general information about enabling laws, criticizing the opposition and the lack of democracy or inefficiency of the government (all 8 %).⁸⁶

In all the articles, except in one, the people are presented quite passive and there does not seem to be much of a dialogue with the people even though they are seen as essential actors. The most active people are presented in the frame 1) plural nation. This frame represents the view of the opposition sympathizers. The editorial line of balanced information is also evident. To balance the frame “plural nation,” there is another equally clear and strong frame, 2) the shepherded people, which is mostly the viewpoint of the government. In addition to these frames there are two minor frames. They are considered minor since they are not so much about the people per se but the politicians. The frames are present in the same articles, but what is interesting is the dialogue between the opposition and the government that is constructed by placing the articles of different viewpoints on the same page (layout strategy). Therefore, it was pretty easy to detect the frames, too.

Plural nation: In this opposition frame, the Venezuelan nation is presented as plural and consisting of different kinds of people who are all equally valued. All these people are a basis of a democracy, which is seen as the most important thing in society. The politicians are ruling because the people have given them the mandate to make decisions and it should be respected. The

⁸⁶ There was a curious incident, however, with collecting the articles. The articles were gathered between January and March of 2011. Due to a technological error in the digital newspaper of *Últimas Noticias* I was not able to save some of the pages of the newspaper. That is why I needed to contact *Últimas Noticias* in June 2014 to get the missing pages. They were sent to me as pdf files including all the pages of the asked issues. When comparing the pages I already had and the new pdf files some of the pages were different. In the new files for example on the cover of December 11, 2010 the case of enabling law is absent while all the other headlines and pictures remain the same. In the old file gathered in 2011 the main title is “Chávez asks for the enabling law to set laws for the emergency”. In the new file the cover says: “More victims are brought to Miraflores (the presidential palace)”. Therefore, I do not know if in some of the original pages missing had something about the case since in the newer version they are missing. Thus, it should be acknowledged that the data is a combination of the two sources.

people are also seen as smart since they are expected to know what is really happening in the country and not blindly believe everything. No one needs to tell them the truth since they can form their own conclusions. The citizens should participate, and defend their democracy and give moral support to the members of the parliament they have elected. It is a bit of an open-ended question if the people in general actually participate or that only the people who are mentioned to participate are indeed the people who do. The groups specifically mentioned are opposition politicians, students, journalists, and civil society in general. The emphasis is on the groups of people who are better off. The poor people are not specifically mentioned but they are not excluded either since civil society may include pretty much anyone. The opposition is calling the people and motivating them so the people do not activate enough on their own.

Shepherded people: In this frame the point of view of the government is presented. The people are extremely passive and they do not seem to know what their own good is. It is said that “unfortunately” the people did not approve the constitutional changes in the referendum of 2007 and that is why the law is developed article by article now. However, the people do look up to their leaders and their decisions since they are “anxiously” waiting for the changes. Metaphors of the frame are a symbolic visit of the leaders to a refuge called La gran familia bolivariana, or Chávez offering a gift certificate to the people indicating the leaders take care of their people like a father figure protecting his families. The people need the shepherding since this way they can achieve a good life, and the leaders can develop the mechanisms that allow the people to obtain the biggest possible amount of security and happiness possible. All of this is done for the good of the people.

It is just theatre: The opposition’s point of view to the “other” is presented in the third frame and this way it is possible to tell more about how they themselves are identified. It is implied that Chavistas do not really understand what the people need: they do not need new laws but new houses. Chávez is presented ruling by control and force. If someone does not cooperate he threatens to expropriate. He wants control, and is using the heavy rains as an excuse to fight the opposition. He does not really care about the people but is even making fun of them and this way deteriorating the democracy of the country. What he really wants is to control the people, implement socialist politics, and confrontation. He is maintaining a “theatre” so that everything seems democratic in Venezuela and abroad but in reality has ulterior motives. As an answer to this in the frame “plural nation,” the people are presented as smart and they cannot be fooled by theatre. Chávez is also presented as a hypocrite since he is using a Cuban slogan, “*Patria, socialismo o muerte!*” which is presented as an unpatriotic sign. It seems that only the politicians are included in this group not the voters of Chávez. There is bad governance, which is not backed by the people.

Unified politicians: In the fourth frame, Chavistas are representing themselves as a unified group working together. They also have some friendly

partners such as Iran or the television channel VTV. They are not trying to get control but, on the contrary, they are disseminating power between different institutions. The parliament and the president are in fact complementing each other's actions. This can be seen as an answer to the accusations of the frame, "It is just theatre". Also, the USA is presented as a bad adversary and, because of it, the Chavista camp is even more unified. Chávez is shown as something big and powerful, but there is something even bigger and more powerful: the "truth," which is feared by the enemy.

These two frames, "it is just theatre" and "unified politicians," show the focus of Chavismo is more on the politicians than on the people in the newspaper case. Other possible frames would have been the enemy of the government and "us the opposition," but they overlapped with the frames already mentioned. One possible frame would have been a frame of social classes. The newspaper seems to bring out the socio-economic classes. There are some symbols or hints presented like someone drinking Evian, a French bottled water brand, and someone having a purse of Prada. Yet, it is said that also the better-off people are part of the Venezuelan nation, even though Chávez is trying to represent them as bad⁸⁷. However, even though the frame is extremely interesting it is so weak it was left out from the analysis and some parts of it are included in other frames.

An interesting juxtaposition is created when a spokesperson of the opposition is interviewed about leaving a complaint to the Organization of the American States (OAS). It is said that

*"It is not an autonomous legislative power, it is docile, ductile, it depends on the interests of Miraflores and not the people," expressed Davila in the adjacencies of the OAS in Caracas, situated in Las Mercedes."*⁸⁸

(UN 16.12.2010)

In these lines, Davila is talking about the interests of the people, but he is separated from the low-income public by mentioning he was giving his statement in Las Mercedes, which is known for its fine restaurants and better-off population. He says he is defending the people but he is separated from them at the same time.

Audience or the public is an interesting factor in the texts. It is mentioned a few times that something is done for the international audience or "what will they think about this abroad?" This indicates there is an awareness there

⁸⁷ For example it is said that President Chávez is "insulting citizens as Venezuelans like him because of a crime of owning apartments at a beach, as if it was a crime" ("insultando a ciudadanos tan venezolanos como él, por el delito de poseer apartamentos en la playa, como si eso fuera delito.") (UN 15.12.2010, p. 56).

⁸⁸ "No es un Poder Legislativo autónomo, es dócil, dúctil, depende de los intereses de Miraflores y no de los intereses del pueblo", expresó Davila en las adyacencias de la sede de la OEA en Caracas, ubicada en Las Mercedes. (UN 16.12.2010, p. 20)

may be an international audience for the events, which has some kind of power since it is worth presenting just for them or thinking about them. Iran and the television channel VTV are mentioned as being some kind of partners of the Chavistas. Also, Cuba is mentioned to be something Chávez admires (since he is copying their slogans). On the opposition side an international partner mentioned is the OAS.

El Universal

In *El Universal*, the articles were gathered from the newspaper's Internet site, which has a link to every piece of news but the cover pages are not available. Because it was not possible to see the actual pages of the newspaper it was difficult to estimate the length of the articles. The length of the articles is estimated from the printed versions of the news so that a small article is less than a sheet of paper, a medium article a sheet or more, and a large article two sheets or more. These cannot be compared with the other newspapers but at least it gives an idea of the emphasis within the newspaper. Thus, the majority are medium-sized (56 %) and the small and large articles have an equal share of 22 percent. The majority of the articles (72 %) did not have an image, at least not in the Internet. Also, the majority was placed in the "Nation and politics" section (72 %). There were also some articles in the opinion section (22 %) and a couple in the economy section of the newspaper (6 %).

President Chávez is a principal actor in one quarter of the articles (25 %), followed by the opposition politicians (22 %). The government, parliament or MPs of PSUV are in third place (16 %), which is shared with experts or NGO representatives. This is the biggest difference between the other newspapers and *El Universal*. The newspaper gives a lot of space for the different kinds of experts, including academics, lawyers, and NGO representatives. The NGOs go hand-in-hand with other experts since some of the spokespersons are academics and NGO representatives, or academics and practicing professionals who are giving their statements representing both of the seats. Also, international organizations and other states are presented in the data (6 %).

Almost half of the articles (44 %) are criticizing or expressing their concern either over the law, the actions of the president, or the parliament. The second biggest category of the subjects is the opinion that the case of enabling law is really about control, power, or enforcing the socialist model (19 %). Also, Chávez is presented explaining why he really needs the law or what he will do if he gets it (16 %). Other minor subjects are the parliament handling the case (6 %) and the opposition taking action against the law (6 %). Thus, the stance of *El Universal* is quite negative and critical towards the law and Chávez's actions. The opposition is shown active and resisting the law and many experts are backing up the oppositions view.

There are a total of four different frames in *El Universal*. Detecting them was not so straightforward even though some tendencies were clear and they

did have some common elements. The frames, therefore, prevailed not only in the same articles but also sometimes in the same context/paragraph.

Active civil society: The first and the second frame are the most difficult ones, but at the same time they were the strongest. Even though they do overlap a bit, their angle is different and therefore it is justified to have two different frames. The first frame, “active civil society,” represents different groups of civil society taking action. The civil society includes academics, journalists, lawyers, and NGOs. They are defending their values and principles. They cannot accept the actions of the government since the government has not taken the people and their will into account. That is why the civil society is trying to get their message heard and they want the rest of the citizens to hear their message and join them. They feel like a powerful group and it is said that even though this time the result is still unknown, in the past civil society has had power since the government has taken “a step back” with their plans because of the active citizens. The confrontation is therefore seen between the citizens and the government.

Constitutional state: In the second opposition-minded frame the value of citizen participation is emphasized. However, within this frame the civil society is presented more vaguely as citizens or Venezuelans. Plurality is mentioned, and the new opposition MPs in the upcoming parliament represent it. The basis of this frame is constitutional democracy. During the current government the parliament, which should represent the will of the people by the democratic order, is weak since it is willing to relinquish its power to the president. The people of Venezuela do not want that. They need to choose between two different systems: centralized power that is favouring certain people and just using the tragedy as an excuse to gain more control, or a strong state that delegates power and has the same rules for everyone. Comparisons are made between Chávez and totalitarian leaders like Hitler, Stalin, and Mao. Also, it is said that the current government is making fun of the people if it thinks the people accept everything they have planned. The people are not as stupid as they think. Within this group the people are treated as one big category. It is said the people or citizens (in general) are or ought to fight for their rights or things might get worse and history may repeat itself (comparisons with totalitarian leaders). However, it is hard to say who is included in the “people.” A hint of it is the use of “plural” which seems to indicate mainly the opposition presence. However, the discourse seems to invite all the Venezuelans no matter who they have voted for.

The victims: The low-income public is included in the third frame. It is probably the least interesting frame since it is a typical frame of victims of natural disaster who are passive and just waiting for help. They are not individuals: they are a group of victims or the affected. They are mere targets of actions, a group that is being helped. The magnitude of the problem is economically portrayed without a human face or by numbers stating there are 130,000 people. They do not care about politics. They want just immediate solutions.

The people and the government working together: The fourth frame may be detected mainly in the quotations of Chávez (quotation strategy). In this frame the government is presented working hard with the people to solve the problems of the country. It is all about “us.” This “us” includes the president, government, and the “people,” including the victims. It is difficult to define exactly who belongs to the “people,” but it is easy to say who does not: the bourgeois, with its television channels and spokespersons. Low socio-economic classes are represented in the frame. This is the only frame that has clear visual images (of Chávez from AVN⁸⁹). The State is presented to be for the people and with the people. Everyone is working together; it is about solidarity. Chávez answers to the needs of the people and even though everyone is working together he is shown as a strong leader that carries the ultimate responsibility.

The last two frames also go together since they both bring out the low-income citizens and they both have a concrete and material point of view. Within the third frame it is about the numbers and money, and in the fourth frame it is said that “every Venezuelan family should have their *own* home”.

Tal Cual

In *Tal Cual*, the size of the articles is divided more evenly between big (39 %), medium (39 %), and small (22 %). There are no stories extending to several pages. Many stories have a photograph but several drawings are also present. These are attached to the editorial or opinion section. Government party politicians (30 %) are slightly more present as principal actors in the articles than opposition politicians (26 %), but President Chávez (13 %) is also notably present.

The case ends up on the cover for five days, which is every single day the newspaper is dealing with the case (*TC* is published only on six days of the week). This indicates they give big importance to the events. The angle of the stories varies a lot. The two dominant ones are “there is another reason for the law than the rains” (22 %), and “democracy and dictatorship” (17 %). Other dominant angles are “the parliament handling the case” (13 %), and “the opposition criticizing the law” (13 %). This reveals a lack of confidence in the current politicians. There are no stories about the heavy rains and people suffering, but this is understandable since it seems that *Tal Cual* does not connect the enabling law to the damages but it is looking for Chávez’s ulterior motives for the law. This may also be the reason why the people are not directly mentioned so many times. Therefore, two of the three frames found are weaker. Yet, they tell something about the newspaper’s approach.

Our country: It is interesting that the weakest of all the frames is “Our country”. In *Tal Cual*, it is rare to address the readers as “us” and when it happens, this “us” was vaguely defined. However, it is brought up in rhetori-

⁸⁹ Agencia Venezolana de Noticias which is owned by the state.

cal meanings such as “are we not going to do anything?” or “this is what is happening in ‘our country.’” One way to emphasize the feeling of “us” is brought out in a story where teachers of the faculties of law in Venezuelan universities tell us they will go out to the streets and barrios to call for attention to the constitution of Venezuela. Also, in one article it is said the opposition really “understands the needs of the people.” So it can be stated that the background for this frame is that the people are seen working together for their country for some common good. As a consequence, for example, regional governors have succeeded in making the country a better place. To describe the viewpoint of the citizens working for the nation it is said, “We do not stay with our hands crossed.” Meaning, that people are taking action and there are several positive things happening in the country as a result.

Venezuelans: Venezuelans are described to be a varied group. The view of the Venezuelan society seems to be there are Chávez and his politicians (even called his clapping seals), and then there are the rest of the Venezuelans. The fact that there are several citizens who did vote for him is not brought out. Only in one opinion article it is said that the politicians asked the people to vote for them and they voted as if they were not thinking of what they were doing. On the contrary, it is mentioned the opposition candidates who entered the parliament were voted by citizens. The opposition is mentioned to have a possibility to restore institutional democracy to the Venezuelans.

There are not many specific groups that are mentioned as Venezuelans. However, it is interesting to note there is one article about the governor of Amazonas who happens to be a South American native and also a member of an opposition party. Chávez has on occasion emphasized his indigenous heritage and the importance of the indigenous people for Venezuelan identity (Kozloff 2005; El Universal 12.10.2013). Yet, in this article it is said the indigenous people are not with Chávez and, moreover, their state is thriving because of their own regional government. Chávez’s government has not paid the debt it owes to the State. The citizens are also shown to demonstrate against the decisions of the government. For example, university students protested “with a rain of bottles and stones.” Also, the opinion of Venezuelans is shown in a story where the newspaper asks the opinion of the people of what they think is still missing from Chávez to be a dictator. Visual images of the Venezuelans include students protesting and the (native) governor with a sign of his opposition party to underline his political stance.

The difference within the first two frames is that in the first one, the fact that it is “our” country and the citizens are working, or at least should be working, to make a difference is highlighted. In the second one, Venezuela is represented as a country of Venezuelans who are a varied group of people but a democratic process is uniting them. The politicians are responsible for the people who voted for them and, for now, the Venezuelans have been able to restrain the power ambitions of the leaders.

Chacumbelianos: The third frame, where “them/the other” is described, is the strongest. In this category, *Tal Cual* includes President Chávez and his

government and also other Chavista politicians. It does not include any ordinary citizens. The main target is Chávez himself. *Tal Cual*, or mainly its editor-in-chief Teodoro Petkoff, uses the word “Chacumbele” to name President Chávez. “Chacumbele” is not a commonly-known word in Venezuela⁹⁰ but Petkoff’s systematic use has made it to signify Chávez among the readers of *Tal Cual*. By using this word it could be interpreted that *Tal Cual* is trying to change the empty signifier that Chávez is and makes Chávez a floating signifier. There is a struggle over the meaning of Chávez in Venezuela. In the frame, Chávez’s symbolism is not reinforced by using his own name. Chávez is also called by various other names, which serve the same function. Everyone knows who is talked about but they do not reinforce his Chavista symbolism. Moreover, calling Chávez “Chacumbele” may make him a less-humane political object. Within this frame, Chavista politicians are described as weak and even incompetent and doing whatever their leader wants. Without even knowing the content of the law they are willing to pass it because they blindly trust their leader. Chávez does not want the welfare of the people by passing the law but more power and control of society. He is not thinking of the best interest of the Venezuelans unlike the non-governmental people. He does not care at all what the poor really need. He even raises taxes, which hits the poor the hardest. Chávez is doing this because he has a “nature of a wilful abuser.” He is also compared to Hitler or being on the path of Hitler. The tone of the texts can be sarcastic (sarcasm as a journalistic strategy). A subheading may be “Surprise, surprise” when they say that the parliament is thinking about extending the law up to 24 months instead of 12 months.

Tal Cual strongly sees the juxtaposition between the government and the rest of the nation. The reasoning of the government is not elaborated on. It is explained it is the nature of Chávez to want power and that is why he and his followers are acting the way they are. This is interesting considering editor-in-chief Teodoro Petkoff’s background. He is a powerful⁹¹ man with a communist background so he has plenty of knowledge about socialism. Yet, his lack of understanding towards Chávez’s policies speaks for his own view about left-wing politics (e.g. Petkoff 2005).

Common frames

In order to understand the scattered data better, many of the frames were united and common frames were formed (see table 3). In case 1, there are four common frames found that were shared by two or more newspapers. These are, a) active and smart (*UN*, *Uni* & *TC*), b) passive people (*CdO*, *UN* & *Uni*), c) discarded (*CdO*, *UN* & *TC*), and d) unified nation (*UN* & *Uni*).

⁹⁰ According to some sources (e.g. www.magazine.com.ve), “Chacumbele” means, in a Cuban song, a man who is looking for his own death with his bad actions.

⁹¹ He was a Minister of Economy in President Caldera’s government in 1996-1999 and a presidential candidate against Chávez in 2006 elections.

Comparing the frames of the newspapers, it is easy to see how different newspapers position themselves in the political field. *Correo del Orinoco* has the most government point of view. It represents the people backing up the government. At the same time, the antagonistic divide between the “us” and “them,” the rest of the society and the opposition, is clear. The government knows what is best for the people, but at the same time the people need to be active, especially on the micro level to organize themselves and help and monitor the government. This may be compared to the Gramscian view where it is essential the people are active. Since they do not necessarily have direct connections to power they may act through different organizations. Moreover, the interaction between the two refers to Gramsci’s second definition of the State, i.e. the State includes the civil society. (Gramsci 1982, 122, 125; see chapter 3.1.1.)

Últimas Noticias is trying to balance between the two poles. It represents the two sides but seems to lean more on the anti-government view since it shows the people of Chavismo as passive like the other private newspapers (“passive people”). However, *Correo del Orinoco* also shares the frame of passive people. The civil society working against the government is presented as active (“active and smart”) in the private newspapers. The (non-governmental) people are shown as smart. Politics or politicians cannot fool them. They know what is really happening. Hence, the frame suggests the government hegemony has not penetrated the society and thus is not a real form of hegemony. This frame of “active and smart” people is also found in *El Universal* and *Tal Cual*. *El Universal* shows people as active even though they are not principal actors in the articles. There is another antagonism than the one between the government and the opposition, or the people and the power holders. In the private newspapers, the political confrontation is suggested to prevail between the people and the government, i.e. the antagonist divide relies between the Chavista politicians in the government and the National Assembly, and the rest of the society. *El Universal* states the “people” have power because they forced the government to back up some of the things said in the past. Thus, the people are active against the government and fighting for their rights.

Related to the previous point in three newspapers (*Cdo*, *UN* & *TC*), the antagonism between the “us” and “them” is presented (“discarded”). The frame is especially clear in the extreme newspapers (*CdO* & *TC*). They both have a clear enemy and they both know more or less to whom the newspaper is targeted. The two more neutral newspapers are trying to tell news to a more varied group. Therefore, they do not have as clear “enemy” frames either. They are balancing between journalistic principles telling both sides of the story. Surprisingly, *El Universal* has a more neutral stance since it is telling the government’s point of view using quotations.

As mentioned, “the people” in populism does not include the whole population (Laclau 2005a; see chapter 3.2.2). In the newspapers, “the other,” i.e. the enemy, was the political opponent. However, it should be noted that the

“ignored” (cf. Sonwalkar 2005) are usually the voters of the opposing side. This means they are not given recognition even though the democratic process is brought out as the main question. However, in some of the frames all the citizens are invited to the group called the people just as long as they are willing to stand for democratic rights. Therefore, it does not matter who you have voted for before just as long as you share the same view of the democracy.

The people as a civil society is a varied group and it is also projected in the frames. Three private newspapers raise different groups such as students, NGOs, and lawyers as experts of the constitution, etc. For them, civil society consists of different kinds of groups that are being active and are trying to get others active, too. In *El Universal*, the low socio-economic classes are specifically referred to in two of the subframes. They are not ignored like in many of the frames of other newspapers. Therefore, it can be said that *El Universal* shows the most varied picture of the people and, because it does not have the frame “discarded,” it is not trying to construct a sense of belonging to a restricted group but offers a more open-minded approach.

Chávez described the “people” in his discourse by using powerful and strong adjectives connecting them to the Bolivarian Revolution (see Lander 2005, 30-31). In the data, the variety of Chávez’s discourse is not reflected but the people of Chavismo were making their everyday contribution to society. The varied collective organizational forms of Chavismo were in the background and individuals were raised as an example as to how to get organized and be active. Yet, all but *Tal Cual* represented the (Chavista) people as passive.

5.1.2 CASE STUDY 2: THE LEADER

The case of Chávez’s cancer in June-July 2011 was chosen to study the signifier of leader since it may be assumed that the illness of the leader added new nuances to his image. These new nuances were present in the media image of Chávez until his death in 2013. By this I refer to a new softer side to the tough-but-father-like revolutionary army leader. In June 2011, Chávez travelled to Cuba to have his knee operated on. However, the trip was prolonged and in the lack of official information rumours started to circulate the president had cancer. He was operated on Cuba. On Thursday June 30th, the president finally came out to the public and had a televised speech from Cuba stating that he was diagnosed with cancer. During the speech he did not say when he would return to Venezuela, but there was pressure to arrive before Venezuela’s 200th independence day, July 5. Indeed, Chávez arrived in Venezuela on the morning of July 4 just in time for the big celebration.

The case showed Chávez not only as representing himself, but also the people, politicians, etc., describing what Chávez meant to them and how they saw him. Therefore, the case showed his multiple roles, i.e. a struggle over

the signifier. The variety of all the frames is tremendous. Thus, they really represent different angles over his meaning.

Correo del Orinoco

In the data of *Correo del Orinoco*, there were a total of 88 articles. In addition to them there were two cartoons and the case was on the cover of the newspaper six days out of the seven researched. Therefore, it can be said the newspaper considered the case extremely important. The reporting differed from the reporting of the Enabling Law since, in this case, the newspaper had mostly small articles (49 %). Also, there were fewer pictures. 45 percent of the articles did not have any pictures and the articles with more than one picture (14 %) were usually focused on something else other than the cancer. This tells a lot about the lack of good images since the president was neither available for the media nor even in the country.

This absence of the leader can also be seen in the principal actors. Chávez was not a common principal actor in the articles (9 %). Much more common were the people (19 %), the government (17 %), and PSUV or MPs of PSUV (19 %). Therefore, we can see it was mostly other people talking about Chávez and his leadership and that is why the case is excellent to study about the leader and his image.

Almost half of the articles (46 %) were about someone – a person, organization, or a group of people – showing their support to Chávez or celebrating his return to Venezuela. There were several other subjects, too, such as bicentenario (7 %), Chávez's recovery (6 %), opposition's actions (critique towards opposition)(6 %), opposition criticizing (7 %) or the so-called "show must go on," where it is emphasized that even though Chávez is on sick leave the country continues his work (7 %). The multiple meanings Chávez represents were seen in the way he was called among his supporters⁹². The different names were not connected to specific frames even though "comandante" was often used in the revolutionary leader frame.

There were a total of seven stronger frames in the data. In addition to them there were two weaker frames. The strong frames were:

Human leader: In this frame, Chávez's human face is presented. It is reminded that despite all his extraordinary qualities, he is just a human being in a human body. Also, that he can be vulnerable. The citizens urge him to rest and get better. Chávez admits that all his life he has made "fundamental mistakes" and has not taken good care of himself and his health. However, after the bad news about the cancer, he has already changed his bad habits and is doing exercise and following a healthy diet. In fact, this is a lesson that

⁹² Some of the names he was called include: El Mandatario Nacional/venezolano, El Jefe del Estado, El Presidente, El Comandante (de la Revolución Bolivariana), Dignitario venezolano, El Presidente de la Republica, El ciudadano Presidente (de la Republica), El líder de la Revolución (Bolivariana), Dignitario (nacional), Nuestro Presidente Comandante, Líder socialista, Ejecutivo Nacional, Nuestro camarada, Líder de Sabaneta, Su máximo Líder, El camarada Presidente, and El Señor Presidente.

all the Venezuelans could learn from since this helps to remind them how important good health is.

Strong and independent leader: Chávez is presented as a strong and active leader that cannot be conquered even by cancer. Despite being sick he is constantly working and arranging the policies of the country. He is also making independent decisions. He will not return to the country when other people tell him to do so. It is his decision and his decision only. There is no time for being sad about the news since there is so much to do. Chávez is described as a strong, energetic, responsible, combative, and vital leader that rises above difficulties.

Popular leader: Chávez is also presented as a popular leader. Not only leaders but also people from other countries want to express their solidarity towards the president. Also, Venezuelans from different parts of the country want to show their support. They show this in the demonstrations, giving him applause for one minute or organizing a football game called *la Copa Hugo Chávez Frias*. Chávez is a revolutionary leader that wants to make the world a better place and that is why he is so popular.

The Legend: Chávez is already a legend that is carrying out the dream of the Latin American liberator Simón Bolívar. He is fighting for Bolívar's dreams. In fact, Chávez is often compared to Simón Bolívar. Bolívar liberated Latin America 200 years ago from Spain, and now Chávez is liberating Venezuela and Latin America again. This time the region is liberated from the control of capitalism and imperialism. It is Chávez's historic role. Sometimes Chávez is even shown to be equal to a messiah:

"(Chávez) asked that the person would have faith in the revolution and he had. 'I talked with him (Chávez) and he told me to believe, and that is what I did. Today I have my house and my pension after 40 years living on the street and all is thanks to this man (Chávez).'"⁹³

(Correo del Orinoco 5.7.2011, p. 4)

Leader=the nation: Within this frame the leader is presented as one of the people. It is a battle they all are fighting together to win over the cancer. Such metaphors as "Everyone of us is Chávez" is used and the slogans are "With Chávez everything, without Chávez nothing!" or "The people with Chávez". Chávez is just one of the citizens and because of that there is a connection between them. Chávez understands people because he is one of them.

Loved and loving leader: This frame features Chávez as a father figure and his supporters are presented, but in the case of his cancer this is expressed in a different form. Since Chávez has been taking care of his people so lovingly during all these years, this time it is the people's turn to show all

⁹³ "Este (Chávez) pidió que tuviera fé en la Revolución y el la tuvo. "Hablé con el y me dijo que creyera, y así lo hice. Hoy tengo mi casa y mi pensión después de 40 años de vivir en la calle y todo gracias a ese hombre."

their love back. In fact, the people express their love towards their leader quite frankly, saying: “I love you.” Chávez responds by saying he feels he is “bathing in love.” With all this love Chávez is able to feel better. The moral message of this frame is that the love always wins.

Revolutionary leader: In this frame, a bit of a mixed message is presented. Chávez is shown as a revolutionary leader who is showing direction to the people. He is the father of the revolution and without him the revolution would not be the same. He has organized everything and in the future will be the head of the revolution. Yet, it is said that because of his absence a new phase of the revolution can begin. The people need to participate more in the making of the revolution because it cannot depend on just one man. The Venezuelan people have not reached this stage yet, though, and therefore it is still necessary Chávez guides them.

In addition to these fairly strong frames there are some weak ones where Chávez is shown as a self-sacrificing leader and a humble leader that does everything for his people. He worked so hard for the wellbeing of others that he got sick. In the frame “the president of the whole nation,” Chávez is shown as a legally-elected president that represents people from all different backgrounds (except the opposition). A variety of backgrounds of his supporters is also represented.

Other possible frames were “loyalty,” telling us that loyalty is appreciated and demonstrated among the people surrounding Chávez; “a son of socialism/son of Fidel” showing Chávez being a member of the socialist family; and, as if being a son of Fidel Castro, a “victorious leader” that is already heading to the election win in the upcoming year’s presidential campaign despite the cancer; a “determined leader” that is doing everything according to a strict plan and is shown to develop his own abilities such as self-reflection and studying; and “constitutional leader elected by the people.” One possible frame that was missing was a military leader considering Chávez’s background. However, this side of him was demonstrated in the militaristic metaphors that were in the texts plenty. Also, another factor affecting the language was a common usage of these kinds of metaphors when someone has cancer.

Últimas Noticias

The majority of the articles in *Últimas Noticias* are in the section “el País” (79 %) but there are also some articles in the opinion section (21 %). The case is not a headline story on all of the days (2 out of 7 days) and there are no large articles. The majority of them are medium-sized (58 %). Likewise, the majority of the articles do not have a picture (60 %). The main actor in the articles of *Últimas Noticias* is definitely Chávez (23 %) and his politicians (PSUV, MPs or the government, 29 %). Far behind them is the opposition (10 %). The topic of the articles varies a lot. The majority of them are about Chá-

vez's illness and his state (21 %) and the celebration of the bicentenario (13 %). The other topic mentioned is showing solidarity towards Chávez (10 %).

Detecting the frames was not an easy task since the newspaper seemed to have a bit of a distant approach to the case compared to the other newspapers.

The five strong frames are:

Human Being: The human being approach was shown by the doctors telling us about typical cancer cases and their treatment. Chávez is shown as a fragile and normal human being with regular bodily restrictions. He confesses he has made mistakes and has not taken care of himself. That is why he got cancer but has learned something from it. Now he is trying to take care of his body by eating healthier and doing exercise. Chávez is affected emotionally by the disease and therefore is shown in a new light as a human being instead of a strong leader.

Strong leader: Even a disease does not weaken a strong leader in this government-minded frame. He is physically and mentally in charge of his constitutional obligations. He is in action, making decisions and informing his government. He is the head of the revolution. A justified question to this frame is posed by the opposition in the pages of the newspaper: if he is mentally and physically capable of being in charge and he is working hard, why does he need to rest and stay in Havana, then?

Popular leader: International actors and Venezuelans all wish Chávez a quick recovery. This way he is shown as a popular leader. Even his adversaries are showing their solidarity. He is a liked person and his adversaries know his persona and his politics are two different things.

Cult figure: There is a cult created around Chávez's persona. He is not a normal human being. He is a revolutionary leader, a "superman." There is a cult of personality and myths created around him. Therefore, his party and politics depend solely on him and his image as a great leader.

Political leader: Chávez is presented as a political leader in this Chavista frame. The news of his disease has spread around the world. He is a democratically-elected president of a country and once he has defeated the disease he will pursue the next presidential term in the election of 2012. Moreover, it is hinted maybe the opposition needs him as an adversary in politics because without him they do not have a common enemy.

In addition to the strong frames there were three weak ones. "Secretive leader" shows the regime as authoritarian and hiding information. Chávez is compared to Mao, for example. There are a lot of rumors and they are conflicting. They all cannot be true so no one knows what the correct information is. "Non-existing leader" shows Chavismo without Chávez himself. It tells a story of Chavismo living a life on its own. The government does not depend on Chávez. They are in charge and are able to run the country without him. Chávez is shown as a bit distant. Proofs of his wellbeing like video clips and photographs are shown. Chávez does not comment himself but the government's spokespersons tell us about his wellbeing. The country does

not fall without him. He can take the time off to get better. The last frame, “Together with Fidel,” shows Chávez together with the Cuban leader Fidel Castro. Chávez needs the guidance of Fidel, who is referred to as the true power of Venezuela. They are friends and are both great leaders, but still without Fidel, Chávez would not be anything. Fidel is his brother, father, and a doctor. Yet, there is a piece of advice given to Chávez that he should get rid of Fidel. Fidel does not think about the best of Venezuela.

Possible alternative frames in *Últimas Noticias* were “united with the people” where Chávez is shown as one of “us,” the people. He talks about how we will conquer the battle together. Also, a “revolutionary leader” could have been possible but it was presented only in a couple of citations of Chavistas.

El Universal

In *El Universal*, the majority of the articles are large (47 %) and they do not have a picture (63 %). Almost all the articles are in the national and politics section (51 %) or the opinion section (44 %). The main actor in most of the articles is Chávez (16 %) or some of his politicians (AN, government or PSUV 23 %). Other actors are the opposition (10 %), a foreign country or leader (7 %), or has no principal actor at all (21 %). Even though the illness of the president is important, it did not stand up as a main topic of the articles (7 %). Instead, the newspaper has articles on the country’s problems (8 %), and the leadership or lack of it (18 %).

There are altogether seven strong frames:

Mortal man: This frame is connected to the frame “superman.” Since there is this built (fake) image of Chávez as a superman, it crumbles with the news of cancer. Chávez is a human being, after all. He has lost weight and is described as physically looking ill because of the cancer. He has not been affected by the disease just physically but also emotionally. He has turned from the superman that he thought he was into a mortal man. Even he himself admits that sometimes one forgets how fragile one is and is made of flesh and bones by admitting he has made mistakes. Something a superman would never do. As a consequence, Chávez has lost power and he and Venezuela will never be the same. The people realize he is just like any other human being.

Strong leader: The next two frames are “Chavista” frames in the sense that they came across in citations of Chavistas (citation strategy). In “strong leader,” Chávez is presented as a strong leader that keeps on working even though he is sick. He is still in charge of everything like before because he realized the responsibilities he has. He does not give up but has a positive attitude and is already thinking about the forthcoming elections of 2012. Chávez does not need to change anything; he is already a noble human being.

One of the people: This Chavista frame is a combination of two different frames: popular leader and together with the people. There is an emotional connection between Chávez and the people of Venezuela. There is also a bigger unspoken connection since it is said the people do know what Chávez has

even though it is not explicitly said. Also, Chávez can *feel* what his illness has caused in the Venezuelan soul and body.

Superman: Chávez is sarcastically portrayed as a superman who is capable of doing pretty much anything. This image of him is transmitted through television and radio. There is a sarcastic feel to the frame since pompous metaphors are used (sarcasm as a journalistic strategy). Chávez rises like a phoenix, he is compared to Christ, Superman, and a gladiator of a thousand battles, and Venezuela without Chávez is compared to a church without a priest. Chávez is present everywhere and he is capable of fixing all the problems. The image of Chávez is consciously built using propaganda and media manipulation. It is said that:

“This panorama has sustained the image of a good man in the middle of an atmosphere of corruption and inefficiency. It is what Cabrera calls the Theory of Tarzan; something like a human in the middle of a jungle that lives among inferior creatures.”⁹⁴

(*El Universal* 3.7.2011)

Autocrat: This frame is related to the frame “superman.” However, this frame is different since it lacks the sarcastic tone and instead the basis of this frame is the constitution. Chávez is an autocratic leader. He has built a system where other leader candidates are not permitted. He does whatever he wants. The lack of information is a sign of a totalitarian state. Everything depends on him and only him. His government is just following his orders so when he is not able to be in charge they do not know what to do. Chávez does not care about Venezuelans, the country or the constitution. He has not learned anything from the cancer. He thinks he can just shake it off and keep on doing what he has always done.

Under Cuba's thumb: Here Chávez is presented through the relationship he has with Cuba and its leaders, especially Fidel Castro. Chávez is Fidel's son or apprentice, and it is Cuba that is exercising actual power in Venezuela. Fidel also takes care of Chávez physically. He is the one who made the diagnostics and demanded the medical exams. Chávez trusts his judgment and listens to him. He is Chávez's father figure since Chávez even made a confession to Fidel that he has made a big error of not taking care of his health. Cuban doctors and nurses take care of Chávez's health. However, the intentions of the Castro brothers are not so sincere. The isolated island is dependent on Venezuelan oil and money, and they want more. Chávez may be a dictator in his own country but there is something more powerful than him.

Failed leader: In this slightly weaker frame, Chávez is presented as a failed leader who has failed to take care of his country. There are many prob-

⁹⁴ “Ese panorama ha afianzado, la imagen del hombre bueno en medio de un entorno corrupto e ineficiente. Es lo que Cabrera alude a la “**Teoría de Tarzán**”: algo así como un humano en medio de la selva, que vive entre seres inferiores.”

lems in the country but Chávez is hiding in Cuba not taking care of his responsibilities. It is often referred to he has a sick country, not just a sick body. He is not capable of solving the problems of the country.

It was not so easy to detect all of the frames from *El Universal* since they were not so explicitly presented in the texts. They overlap with each other and are connected. Some of them are responses to each other.

Tal Cual

In *Tal Cual*, of the six issues studied the case is on the cover for five days. Therefore, it can be considered as a case of big interest to the newspaper. The majority of the articles are medium-sized (55 %) and about half of them have an image (48 %). The size of the articles and the number of the pictures show the case is considered important. In *Tal Cual*, the number of opinion articles should be noted. The total of 45 percent of all the articles mentioning the case of cancer are opinion articles. Almost all of the rest (43 %) are published in the politics section. In addition, there are four editorials. The most common actors in the newspaper are politicians who support Chávez (45 %). They represent the National Assembly, the government or the party PSUV and many times their roles are mixed. It is interesting to notice that Chávez is an actor only in two articles. Also, the number of articles without an explicit actor is common since so many texts were opinion articles. The subject of the articles widely varies. The most common one is hiding the illness or the truth of Chávez's condition (15 %). The newspaper largely focuses on speculations on what would/will happen without Chávez concerning the party PSUV and the governance of the country.

There are six frames in total:

Fragile human being: In this frame it is reminded that, after all, Chávez is a human being and can get sick. Also, Chávez himself needs to face the limitations of his body. The main idea in the frame is to say that people should be able to differentiate between the person and the politicians. Everyone is hoping that Chávez, as a person, will defeat the cancer, but at the same time they can be worried about the political consequences of the disease.

A puppet of Castro: In this frame it is implied the Castros in Cuba have the real power. They steer the politics of Venezuela. Chávez will return to Venezuela when Fidel Castro decides he can do so. Cubans are interested in Venezuela because the state of Venezuela is economically supporting Cuba. It is even suggested that practically Cuba and Venezuela share the same regime. Within this scenario, Chávez seems to have a role of a puppet or maybe a son of Fidel listening to the wise advice of his superior.

Cult of personality: This frame implies that a trance-like cult of personality is built around President Chávez. It is built by using the media, including *cadena*s and Twitter messages. It is also built by organizing "spontaneous" marches of Chávez's supporters. However, these events are not as genuine as they seem since the people are brought to the capital from the countryside by

buses and they sell different kinds of Chávez merchandise like photographs, posters, shirts, and dolls. Chávez's supporters are showing their feelings openly: they cry and are very emotional over the bad news of cancer. However, it is implied all this may be a bit staged because after a few blocks of marching the people continue their lives as if nothing had happened by drinking, eating, and happily chatting with each other.

Autarch: Autarchic Chávez does whatever he wants. The government is under his command and he is above the State. His followers should follow him without questioning his demands. Even though Chávez is the chief of state and Chavismo, he does not trust anyone. Many of his followers are loyal because of fear. Chávez wants to have control of everything.

Secretive leader: In this frame, all the secrecy around his health is emphasized. People deserve to know the truth about their president's health. Yet, the government and the president himself were sitting on the information for a long time telling lies and conflicting information. Finally, the president himself came to the spotlight and told the truth, but even then he did not tell the whole truth. It was never told which cancer he has. Later, it was told that the ministers were not allowed to tell the truth. In this frame it is led to believe the government is incompetent and there may even be internal powerplay in the PSUV party. Or it is said that it is typical of despots to withhold information from the public about these kinds of issues. As a result, it is pondered what kind of different consequences could the cancer of the leader have. A more direct consequence is all the rumors concerning the health of the leader. Because people do not have official information they are looking for information from alternative sources.

Irreplaceable bellwether: Chávez is also an irreplaceable leader and he has a vision to show the country its direction. This frame is different from the frame "autarch" since in this one Chávez is not an autocratic leader but the people appreciate his vision and respect him. It is questioned if there can be revolution without him. He may even be the most exceptional leader there has ever been in Latin America. He is the only central figure in Chavismo and therefore irreplaceable. He has many exceptional qualities. He is able to connect with the people and interpret their will. He is also able to maintain cohesion among heterogeneous groups. He also has great charisma. There simply is not another character like him. The expectations of Chávez vary. Because he is a man with exceptional skills, he could use them for good and steer the country to change the atmosphere. But it is also reminded that, yes, Chávez is irreplaceable but he is irreplaceable to his supporters, not to the opposition.

The six frames were quite clear and there were not that many alternative frames. However, one of them was "incompetent leader." In this frame, the president is presented as incompetent and because of this he has managed the country's affairs badly. A metaphor of him ruining the health of the country before ruining his own health is used.

Common Frames

The great number of the frames is interesting in case study 2. It shows the diversity of President Chávez's character and role, but also the hidden power structures since some of the frames come across through citations of the political power holders. Even the number of the names Chávez is called is great. The frames of *Correo del Orinoco* can be thought of being closest to PSUV's ideals. Therefore, the comparison enables examining how these frames come across in other newspapers or how they are responded to. In fact, the frames present many statements and responses to them. There were eight common frames in the data that were shared by two or more newspapers. They were: a) human being (*CdO*, *UN*, *Uni* & *TC*), b) strong leader (*CdO*, *UN* & *Uni*), c) supreme leader (*CdO* & *Uni*), d) popular leader (*CdO* & *UN*), e) cult figure (*UN*, *Uni* & *TC*), f) weak leader (*Uni* & *TC*), g) authoritarian leader (*Uni* & *TC*), and h) revolutionary leader (*CdO* & *TC*).

A point of view that all the newspapers had was Chávez as a "human being" due to the nature of the case study. In this frame, Chávez was presented as a strong person, but the cancer shows he is a normal human being after all and can get seriously ill. In the private newspapers' "human being" frames it is also essential Chávez admits he has made mistakes. This approach comes from Chávez's statement where he confesses he now realizes he has made mistakes since he has not taken better care of his health. In *El Universal* and *Últimas Noticias* it is said that, as a consequence, Chávez is not seen as a powerful leader anymore. The human touch in his image makes him more fragile. In fact, both of the newspapers describe how Chávez is seemingly affected not only physically but also emotionally. This is something that is completely missing in *Correo del Orinoco*. *Tal Cual* has a different approach and it is underlined that the political leader Chávez should be differentiated from the human being Chávez. Everyone is wishing for the wellness of the human being even though the political leader is seen as an adversary. Others should be able to do this as well and realize the critique towards Chávez is critique towards his politics, but as a human being, he deserves to live a happy life. Therefore, it is possible to be worried about the political consequences of the illness and hope for Chávez's recovery. *Correo del Orinoco* turns this confession of making mistakes into something positive, something that all Venezuelans could learn from. They should observe their life habits and make needed changes in their exercise and eating routines.

In *Correo del Orinoco*, ("strong leader") Chávez is presented working hard and taking action despite his illness. He is a strong, vital, and independent leader who has a lot on his shoulders but is not afraid of all his responsibility. *Últimas Noticias* and *El Universal* have similar kinds of frames where Chávez is described to be strong and not physically or mentally weakened by the disease. This frame comes across in these two newspapers mostly in the quotations so it may be seen as a "Chavista" frame the party PSUV could be trying to enforce.

The emotional connection between the leader and the people is also emphasized in a “Chavista” frame of “supreme leader.” In *Correo del Orinoco*’s frame, Chávez is presented as a legend who is an extremely loved leader; the people can feel his love and he can feel the people’s love. *El Universal* also has a frame that emphasized the emotional connection between the leader and the people of Venezuela. It is underlined the people know what Chávez has and how he is doing even if it is not said aloud. Chávez can also *feel* what his illness has caused in the Venezuelan soul and body. Panizza (2005, 19-20; see also chapter 3.2) pointed out that in populism the people may identify with the leader through the leader’s body and personal life. Here, the leader, including his body, is symbolically an extension of the people as much that they form a unity.

The frame “cult figure” (*UN, Uni & TC*) could be an ironic response to the *Correo del Orinoco*’s frame supreme leader. The private newspapers deal with this pretty pretentious frame saying there is a cult of personality built around Chávez’s persona. He is not a normal human being but a “superman.” This image is deliberately built using the media and therefore it is not the whole truth. Chávez and PSUV’s politics are built around him and they would not exist without him. Especially *El Universal*, which uses sarcastic metaphors (cf. sarcasm as a journalistic strategy).

In *Correo del Orinoco*, (“popular leader”) different actors are showing their solidarity to Chávez because they realize how important Chávez’s mission is to make the world a better place. In *Últimas Noticias*, on the contrary, the reason for all the wishes is that even his adversaries know how to distinguish his persona from his politics.

El Universal and *Tal Cual* share an opposition-minded frame of “authoritarian leader.” In this frame, Chávez is presented as an autocratic leader that does not listen to anyone and does whatever he wants. *Tal Cual* even hints the government follows Chávez’s orders because they are afraid of him.

In *El Universal* and *Tal Cual*, Chávez is presented as having weak abilities (“weak leader”). The role of Cuba in Venezuelan politics is one of the common themes. Yet, it is not something that *Correo del Orinoco* is proposing since the newspaper does not bring out the theme at all even though Chávez does have close connections with Cuban leaders and spent quite a lot of time there.

In *Correo del Orinoco*, (“revolutionary leader”) Chávez is presented as showing the direction to the people. In *Tal Cual*, it is implied Chávez may even be the most exceptional leader there has ever been in Latin America but only among his supporters.

The great number of different frames shows the struggle there is over the empty signifier that Chávez has become. Thus, Chávez is not only trying to represent many unfulfilled demands such as a father figure and a firm leader the people can trust who is emotionally connecting and caring, but there is a competing view representing him as weak, incompetent, totalitarian or even as a circus-like director staging a cult around him in the context of the oppo-

sition-minded texts. Obviously, the real signifier is even more nuanced as we have seen. In fact, it may be thought that during the several years in power, Chávez became a floating signifier representing something different in different contexts, especially to the opposition.

5.1.3 CASE STUDY 3: THE ENEMY

In February 2012, Chávez's political adversaries had a pre-election for the same year's presidential and regional elections. It was a significant strategic decision since, before this, the votes of the opposition had been spread out to different candidates. With pre-elections, the opposition intended to have strong candidates against Chávez in the presidential elections and Chavista candidates in the governor's and mayor's elections. The case focuses on Chavismo's point of view on the political adversary, the Venezuelan opposition, which is the "other" or enemy that does not represent "us" among Chávez's supporters. However, it should be remembered that since many private media in Venezuela openly oppose Chávez, for them the opposition may represent "us" as Chávez, and his politicians as "them" as noted in case study 1. Focusing on the case of pre-elections makes it possible to say something about both political power blocs. No matter how the enemy of Chavismo is defined or named it can be said it is a powerful floating signifier.

The pre-election day was Sunday February 12th, 2012. The case was on the cover of *Tal Cual* and *Últimas Noticias* every day during the research period. However, in *Correo del Orinoco*, it was the main news on the cover only three days out of the seven and on two days it was a minor headline. Thus, it can be said that for *Correo del Orinoco*, it is less significant than for the others (*TC* & *UN*). The main actor in all of the newspapers (*CdO*: 53%, *TC*: 29%, *Uni*: 42%, *UN*: 48%) is an opposition actor or organization. What is interesting is that *Tal Cual* and *El Universal* raise the people as a main actor in a significant amount of the articles (*TC*: 15 %, *Uni*: 19 %) whereas in *Correo del Orinoco* the people are not presented as the main actor even once.

Correo del Orinoco

In *Correo del Orinoco*, the peak of reporting was on Tuesday and Wednesday after election Sunday. On election day, the reporting concentrated on the elections and the pre-candidates' discourses. In the following days, the newspaper told of how well the system of CNE was functioning and the results of the elections later turned into more negative items like accusations of fraud, destiny of the votes, and the opposition's strategy. Also, it seems the presidential campaign started immediately when the opposing candidate of Chávez was named, but many of these articles are not included in the data since they do not mention the pre-election.

There are 75 articles in the data in total. In addition to that there are 5 cartoons about the opposition. The majority of the articles are medium-sized

(52 %). Almost half of the articles (48 %) have one or more pictures. 69 percent of the articles are in politics or national sections, and opinion articles have a share of 24 percent. The main actors in the articles are the most opposition in general, the MUD, or Comisión Electoral de Primarias (CEP) (32 %). After that come different opposition actors (Capriles, other presidential candidates, other opposition representatives) and pro-government actors (Chávez, CNE, other pro-government actors) with an equal 7 percent share. Subject of 1/5 of the articles is pre-election and its results, and also the opposition's discourse or strategy. Also, the question of what should be done with the physical votes is a central theme (17 %).

There are three different frames about the opposition:

Finally they learn: The first one frames a story about the opposition, which has finally taken a step towards a democratic society and has started to play according to the rules of the surrounding society. The pre-candidates tell about their suggestions and that they believe in democracy. Metaphors used emphasize the big happy event by saying it is a "big national party" or "professional gala" for CNE. With participation, Venezuelan democracy gets stronger. The fact that the opposition used the help of the national institutions CNE and FANB, it's used as a sign of entering the democratic play and respect. As a consequence, however, the opposition will have to accept the results of the actual presidential elections as well (which Chávez will no doubt win). The opposition is emphasizing they are united and backing up the winners even though they were competing against each other in the pre-election. Having the pre-election is a sign of a democratic state because in a non-democratic state, which the opposition says Venezuela is, these kinds of elections would not be possible.

The greedy ones will never change: This is the most common frame of the three. In it, many associations are attached to the image of the opposition so it is a good example of a signifier of the enemy. According to this frame the opposition consists of conservatives, rich bourgeois who represent not only themselves but also Americans, plutocracy, old parties of AD and COPEI, and they were involved in the coup d'état of 2002. They do not have morals and they are even called ultra-right fascists. They do whatever it takes to have capitalism and neoliberalism in the country. They lie so their promises of changing things should be ignored. They do not care about democracy but just want money. Even the obscurities of the elections (not following the procedures and burning the votes) show that. If they would come back to power in Venezuela it would mean returning to the Fourth Republic.

Fragmented empty project: In this frame a story of a minority that does not really have importance in Venezuela is told. They do not have real proposals for the future of the country. They do not even raise real emotions. They just think making politics is throwing meaningless slogans. They are not united even though they try to say that. There are powerful economic actors behind the candidates and they are actually steering the opposition in the direction they want. The election just shows the internal fragmentation of

the opposition and not even their voters know what they are doing since not all of them knew they should also elect the governor's and mayor's candidates.

It was fairly easy to detect the frames although there are some competing ones. The frame of showing a united picture of the opposition got mixed with the "finally they learn" one. The opposition did tell their story in quotations (quotations strategy), but it was mixed with other discourses because of editorial choices and the volume of the other angles.

Hate is an interesting element in the articles. In the newspaper it is the opposition that wants to create hate and confrontation in the population and Chavistas are the ones who create peace and unity.

Últimas Noticias

In *Últimas Noticias*, on the Monday after election day there were the largest volume of articles (25 %), but also on Tuesday the case was vastly reported (18 %). The majority of the articles are medium-sized (54 %), without a picture (52 %), and are placed in the El país section (73%). There are less opinion articles (18 %) than in other newspapers. The most common actor is the opposition or a representative of the opposition (48 %). 40 percent of the articles report on the election or its results. The second most common subject was the opposition and its discourse and strategy (14 %).

In *Últimas Noticias*, there are several frames and some of them are contradicting. This tells about the newspaper's intention to tell balanced news, not taking sides in the conflict.

Five of the frames are more or less strong:

United: This opposition frame is about a united opposition and the people. All the Venezuelans are together in the project and it does not concern only the opposition parties but all the people are included as well. The opposition does not want to divide the nation like Chávez has done. It wants to unite. There is a common goal in the uniting process and it is to give a "knock-out" to the current government.

Together with the people: The opposition represents Venezuelans of all ages, with or without disabilities. They are a varied group of different political backgrounds. They understand the people and are among them, unlike Chávez who is more about big words than action, and governing through television than going to the real people and listening to them. That is why the opposition represents the majority of the country but not all of them can express their political stance in public because there might be consequences. The people want to participate and they want a change. The opposition can offer all of this because it is exercising a true participative democracy where ordinary people can decide about their leaders.

Democrats who care about their country: In the frame, an opposition that has detached itself from the past and the regime of the Fourth Republic is presented. Everybody knows there have been some problems between the

old and new opposition parties. However, it is not important now because they want to focus on exercising true and transparent democracy. They celebrate new democracy where the people are in charge, not the political elite like during the Fourth Republic and Chávez's regime. They do this because Venezuela is their beloved homeland and they do whatever is best for it and its people.

Whiners: In this Chavista frame, the opposition is described as a group that keeps complaining the current regime is a dictatorship. They keep saying the government is "bad" and they are "good." Yet, now the case of pre-election has showed all their accusations are false since they have admitted that free and transparent elections are possible in Venezuela, which obviously would not be possible in a dictatorship. This shows the past elections have been fair and therefore the majority of Venezuelans have voted for Chávez. Thus, the opposition represents a minority.

Extreme right: Extreme right is a frame typically told by Chavista leaders or Chávez himself. It names the opposition as extreme right or bourgeois. The opposition does not play according to the rules of a democracy. It does not acknowledge the best of the country, and they do not even have a chance to win in the forthcoming presidential elections. The people know better and they know the opposition does not represent them. They represent the old regime and they have proven several times contempt for a democracy like during the coup attempt of 2002.

El Universal

In *El Universal*, the majority of the articles were published on Monday (25 %) and Tuesday (21 %). On four days out of the seven there was also a cartoon of Rayma about the case. The majority of the articles do not have an image (60 %). 46 percent are medium-sized, 33 percent small, and the remaining 21 percent large. The newspaper has its own section, *Las primarias 2012*, for the case. This section is included in the national section (in total 45 %). There are also several opinion articles (38 %) and local news (17 %). The most common principal actors are Venezuelans (19 %). Also, opposition in general, MUD or CEP, are often principal actors (18 %). What is different from other newspapers is that in *El Universal*, "we/us" is placed as the principal actor in many of the opinion articles (5 %). The articles talk about "us Venezuelans." This indicates there is some kind of consensus of who the readers of the newspaper are and that they form some kind of unity that represents Venezuelans. Many of the "national news" outlets concentrates on regional reporting from different parts of the country. This affects, together with local Caracas section, a large amount of items other than the presidential candidates being principal actors in most of the news (14 %). The main subjects are the elections and the results in 29 percent of the articles. Intimidation or fear is the main subject in 8 percent, but it was also mentioned in many other articles.

There are four stronger frames in the data:

Uniting opposition: The aim of the opposition is to unite not only the opposition but also Venezuela after Chávez's dividing politics. They are even willing to make personal sacrifices (like Leopoldo López did when he renounced pursuing presidential candidacy). Chávez has divided the country and excluded some sectors of the population. The opposition is trying to unify the whole country again.

Any one of us: The element of fear was also reflected in the frames. In this frame the opposition consists of people of all ages. There are elderly persons, disabled persons, and youngsters. Any one of the Venezuelans can be part of the opposition. The opposition is also far bigger than usually thought. This is where the fear comes into the picture. People are afraid they might lose their jobs, or not get a loan from a state-owned bank or they might be discriminated in some of the government's "missions." That is why they do not publicly say or show their political stance, or why they do not even vote. That is also why many of the voters do not want to get photographed or to say their names to the reporters. Because of this fear the braveness of some voters grew important; they conquered their fear. They are also voting for the persons who have to stay at home. In one opinion article an interesting point is raised:

*"It affects to the increasing emotion that during the weeks before the elections of 12F in the minds of Venezuelans the theme of the fear was put to the fore. Almost all the candidates talked about fear..."*⁹⁵

(El Universal 16.2.2012)

Thus, it was not only something the newspapers and citizens brought out but also something the political candidates highlighted.

Democracy: The opposition wants to act according to democratic rules. They are against corruption and favoring certain persons for their political stance. They cherish values of gender equality (one of the pre-election presidential candidates is a woman), and justice (everyone should be treated equally no matter what their economical or political background is). They have taken Chávez's conception of participative democracy and are showing what it really means. Their democracy is open, transparent, and participative since they are organizing the pre-elections where all the Venezuelans can vote (unlike among the opponents where only a small percentage of Chavistas voted for the presidential candidate and obviously Chávez won). Therefore, the opposition wants to recuperate democracy since it has deteriorated during Chávez's era. All different groups of Venezuelans need to be respected in democracy.

⁹⁵ "Influyó en el desplome de esta emoción, que en las semanas previas a la elección del 12-F en las mentes de los venezolanos se puso el tema del miedo en la paleta. Casi todos los candidatos hablaron de miedo..."

New future: The opposition represents something new. It does not only want to distinguish itself from the governments before Chávez, but it also says Chávez represents something old and it is time for new winds to blow. The opposition is interested in the country and wants to tackle its severe problems. It is not interested in taking part in Chávez's game of accusing and naming the other party of the conflict. It wants results and a better country to live in for all the Venezuelans.

*"...today there are two paths: One of the future, of reconciliation, of respect, of reconstruction and the other of the past, which is this imperfect present time that we are living from day to day."*⁹⁶

(El Universal 13.2.2012)

However, they are not afraid of Chávez. The new opposition is young, almost 20 years younger than the current president. Yet, they are experienced, and Capriles even shares a similar past with Chávez, who both went to prison. The new opposition is also extremely international.

An alternative frame is representing the opposition as part of the international community, but this aspect is included in the strong frames. The other frame highlights how the pre-elections are the ordinary citizens' own project and how they are working to organize them. This aspect was also included in the "any one of us." One alternative frame shows the opposition as a victim of Chávez's attacks. However, it is possible this frame is weak because the case focused on the victorious elections. One of the alternative frames was "bourgeois." It was presented in the articles that showed the point of view of the Chavistas. However, because of the huge volume of articles this frame remained quite weak since there are only a few articles like this.

Tal Cual

The newspaper had reporting on the pre-elections every day, but the biggest share of the articles was published on Tuesday (26 %) and Wednesday (22 %). 43 percent of the articles are medium-sized. Yet, there were many small (32 %) and large (25 %) ones as well. More than half of the articles has a photograph or more (52 %), but also many articles have a drawing or other illustration (19 %). This is explained by the large amount of opinion articles or editorials (41 %). 46 percent of the articles may be classified as political or national. There were also a few economic articles (5 %). The people and the opposition (opposition in general, MUD, and CEP) are principal actors in many of the articles (both 15 %). Participation (20 %) and the results (16 %) are the most common subjects.

There are four frames found:

⁹⁶ "...hoy hay dos caminos: uno de futuro, de reconciliación, de respeto, de reconstrucción y otro del pasado que ya es este presente imperfecto que vivimos día a día"

The people is the opposition: In this frame a large population is included into the opposition. The elections demonstrate there is a large body of opposition voters among Venezuelans. It is said that even in the areas, which are normally thought to be “Chavistas,” the people gathered to vote for the opposition candidates. Examples come from different social classes especially including the *barrios* of Caracas. The participation is bigger than expected. The popularity of the opposition is much larger than it seems, but because people are afraid of the consequences such as losing their jobs, they do not show it openly. The list of Tascon is mentioned several times to explain the fear the people are experiencing. In the pre-elections people beat their fear and go to vote. There are even practical solutions to the problem since vendors sell masks to the voters in line to hide their faces. The significance of the pre-election is the people conquered their fear because they wanted a change.

Unity: Different opposition parties and leaders have united in order to win the elections. The aim is to unite the people and include everyone in society. Capriles is described to be the perfect man for the job. He has a Jewish background and therefore he may be able to forgive the Chavistas and be the core of unity. He represents all the Venezuelans, not just a part of it like Chávez does. The opposition also has a connection with the masses. They confront their voters in real life and do not govern via television. This way Capriles may have a good chance to unite the divided country that Chávez has split.

Democrats: In this opposition frame it is shown how democratic the opposition is. They organized the transparent and fair election, and this way they demonstrate they are capable of governing the country. The opposition is also differentiated from the past since the “new” opposition is identified not only as democratic, but also as young and enthusiastic. Capriles represents the new face of democracy. They play fair and according to the rules. They are not arrogant like the previous governance may have been, but they have learned a lot from the process. They are also cherishing democratic principles because they do whatever it takes to protect the identity of the voters.

Oligarchs: This frame is a weaker one. It is the frame of the alleged point of view of the Chavista leaders. The opposition is unreliable and does not play according to the rules; they cheat and do not have morals. Even though this frame exists on its own in the news, it is in the minority and it is understood this is what the Chavistas say but is not the truth.

There was also one possible frame, which probably would have been stronger if news reporting around Capriles had been taken into account. This frame emphasized the gap between the “new” opposition and the past, and is built around the image of Capriles.

Common frames

There are three common broader frames that are shared by two or more newspapers. They are a) united (*UN*, *Uni* & *TC*), b) democracy (*CdO*, *UN*, *Uni* & *TC*), and c) bourgeois (*CdO*, *UN* & *TC*). The private newspapers share the frame “united” whereas the opposition is described as united and one with the people. The opposition is uniting not only among the opposition politicians and parties, but it is also uniting the divided Venezuelan nation. Chávez has divided the nation and now it is the opposition’s task to unite the people and make it a whole nation again so not a single sector of society would be excluded ever again. The opposition does not include just the parties and the politicians, but common people form the basis of it. Therefore, the opposition includes people from different social classes, ages, and genders. This way they are showing they are reaching out to the people and are on their side together with them. At the same time, they are constructing antagonism (cf. Laclau 2005a; 2005b; see chapter 3.2) between Chávez’s government and the people. The opposition is much larger than it seems since the opposition voters cannot normally show their political stance. This implies the opposition politicians are actually on the (“silenced”) majority’s side and have been marginalized in the current politics (see chapter 3.2.2; cf. Laclau 2005a, 87). This also makes the opposition voters brave because many of them went to vote and beat their fears by showing their political stance. Yet, in *Últimas Noticias*, the frame was a little different showing the variety of the opposition and also distancing the people a bit from the opposition.

In the frame “democracy,” the opposition is showed to follow democratic principals, rules and values. It also shows the opposition distancing itself from the past, from the era of the Fourth Republic. The new opposition listens to the people and is offering more participative democracy for the citizens. Interestingly, *Correo del Orinoco* also has a similar frame. As well, *Correo del Orinoco* tells a story of a democratic opposition, but with a twist. In *Correo del Orinoco*, the opposition is shown to be democratic since they are finally recognizing the democratic institutions of the national electoral council CNE and the national army forces FANB. Therefore, the opposition is finally entering a democracy that already exists in the country. *Correo del Orinoco* and *Últimas Noticias* share a point of view with the opposition because in both of them it is emphasized there is democracy in Venezuela – even though the opposition has kept claiming otherwise – and they are able to organize the pre-elections using the help of state institutions (CNE and FANB).

A frame that existed in all four newspapers was “bourgeois” as a strong or a weak (*Uni*) frame. In *Correo del Orinoco*, this frame was the strongest one. Therefore, it may be considered a “Chavista” frame. In this frame the opposition consists of conservatives, rich bourgeois who represent not only themselves but also Americans, plutocracy, old “oligarchic” parties, and they were

involved in the coup d'état of 2002. They do not have morals and they are called "ultra-right fascists." They do whatever it takes to have capitalism and neoliberalism in the country. They lie so their promises of changing things should be ignored. Thus, the "bourgeois" is a signifier (see chapter 3.2) where all the evil and greed is condensed. Even though this frame did exist in all the newspapers, it was represented with a hint of sarcasm or using quotations in the private ones, which tells us it is a commonly-known frame but has not penetrated through the hegemony in all of society (cf. see chapter 3.1) but is instead forced by Chavistas. The newspapers have the power to present the frame using journalistic strategies.

El Universal and *Tal Cual* share two different elements. In both newspapers there is an element of fear highlighting the voters conquered their fear and went to vote, i.e. they are brave but also that the government is using repression against its citizens. In another frame they present the opposition as the actor of the future. The opposition is differentiated from the past since the "new" opposition is identified as not only democratic, but also young and enthusiastic.

5.1.4 SIGNIFIERS IN THE VENEZUELAN PRESS

In addition to the journalistic strategies already presented there are two points that stand out from the analysis. Next I will focus on them, first by concentrating on the "us" and "them" division, then by looking at the varied image of the leader and the more uniform representations of the opposition. Finally, I will discuss the relation between populism and socialism.

Constructing the "us"

The feeling of "us" is an essential term in this study since it is something that is produced by hegemony. Related to the "us," the people is a core concept in populism since populism is about constructing the unity of the group (cf. Laclau 2005a). By focusing on the concept of the people, it is possible to tell something about who the newspaper is addressing, who are the readers. Sonwalkar (2005) proposes that mainstream journalism, or "banal journalism," as he calls it, is telling the news to "us," to its readers, about the subjects and with the point of view that interests them. *Correo del Orinoco* addresses the "us" quite directly. Yet, it does not identify the "us." The "us" of the newspaper is vaguely the people who are building the nation together. It includes the people from the *barrios* and from the countryside but also the hotel owner who sacrificed his livelihood for a greater cause.

In *Tal Cual*, the "us" is not mentioned often and, when it is, it is left undefined but at the same time includes a variety of people in its definition of Venezuelans as if it would know the readers of the newspaper are only a part of all Venezuelans (against Chávez). The frame describing the "other" ("discarded") in both of the newspapers serve the function of uniting the popula-

tion by depicting who they are not and in this way bring cohesion among the population they address. Like Laclau (2005a, 87) mentions, preexisting signifiers are used for this. Also, it shows the enemy, which is needed in populism (Taggart 2000,94).

In *Correo del Orinoco*, the enemy is called bourgeois and the opposition. These help to maintain the antagonism that already exists in the society (Laclau 2005a, 87). The extreme newspapers have a more specific readership so they are able to address their audience more directly.

Últimas Noticias and *El Universal* try to be more universal mediums since their circulation, and thus the readership, are broader, too. This is why there is also more diversity among the readers, which may affect the content. For them, the people consists of active persons, but it may be thought they are less defined because by identifying the “us” by pointing out “them” it’s not a commonly-used strategy. They do not create contrasting boundaries dividing the population and in this sense they are less populist.

Sonwalkar points out there are actually three groups: the “us,” “them,” and the ignored. The third one he describes as “the most painful” since it is better to be loved or hated than not recognized at all. (Sonwalkar 2005, 264.) In the data it is hardly mentioned there are people voting for the opposing side which makes them the “ignored.”

The concept of the people is not only central in populism but also in democratic society in general. The newspapers are writing the pieces of news as if they are competing who better knows what the people want and need. Their concept of democracy also seems to partly vary because of different ideas of the people. For example, *Correo del Orinoco* wants “real” democracy, which seems to be a more direct democracy on the micro level with strong government guidance on the macro level, and emphasizing mainly the majority’s opinion. *Tal Cual* calls for representative democracy where the emphasis is on a regional level that points in the direction of the decentralizing democracy that was the tendency before Chávez’s era (see chapter 2.1).

The image of political leaders

Varied frames of Chávez tell a story about an empty signifier that is trying to respond to the many demands prevailing in the population since with one newspaper it was possible to have up to seven frames. In the private newspapers there were contradicting frames about him, which shows different prevailing discourses. Thus, Chávez has converted into a floating signifier that represents different things in different contexts (see chapter 3.2). Some of the frames presented in the private newspapers are consistent with the frames of *Correo del Orinoco*, which means that the official governmental view is able to penetrate the private media as well. This may be interpreted as a struggle over discourses.

In the “human being” frame in all the newspapers it is emphasized that Chávez is a mortal man like the rest of us after all. Later glimpses of this new

softer side can be seen, for example, in the presidential campaign of 2012 where Chávez's campaign slogan was: "Chávez! Corazón de mi patria" (Chávez! Heart of the fatherland), and the campaign material consisting of heart-shaped leaflets decorated with hearts. It is possible that because Chávez showed a more humane side of him when he fell ill of cancer he was able to continue this softer approach with credibility. However, there are differences between the newspapers in how they treat Chávez. For some (*CdO*), the president is seen as an internal part of the nation, and for some (esp. *TC*), it is important to separate Chávez's politics from him as a person and in this way keep criticizing his politics while feeling compassion for his illness at the same time.

In cases 1 and 2, the newspapers reflect the conflicting situation of Venezuela. In his rhetoric, Chávez often used the words the people (*el pueblo*) and sovereign (*el soberano*) as synonyms, which created different kinds of interpretations among different parts of the population. For the upper-middle and upper classes and many of the intellectuals, i.e. assumed readers of *El Universal* and *Tal Cual*, this discourse was a source of division and animosity highlighting the division of rich and poor that is a thread in democratic stability but also in their own personal security and prosperity. For popular sectors, these divisions of Venezuelans are not just a product of Chávez's discourse. In fact, recognition of this and appealing to the majority (the people, sovereign) had an integrating effect. (Lander 2005, 33.) As Lander (2005, 33) points out, even though their material conditions may still be poor, Chávez's symbolically integrative discourse generated a sense of belonging. Thus, the "Chavista" frames may be interpreted as constructing identity especially within the movement, and, therefore, they are not directed towards the rest of society. Yet, as the frames are distributed among those other than the so-called radical Chavistas, they also serve the function of deepening the gap between "us" and "them" needed in populism.

In case 3, the division between the government and the private newspapers is clearer since the image presented of the opposition in three private newspapers is more unified. As stated in chapter 3.2, some of the populist features include dividing the society between the "us" and the others in an effort to raise a counter-hegemony and appeal to the people (cf. Laclau 2005a). As previous research has already suggested, both of the power blocs – Chávez and his government, and the Venezuelan opposition – may be described as populist since both of them have a strong enemy they are battling against (Samet 2013). The current research also remarks that both of the power blocs are battling against hegemony – just against different ones. Chávez's side is fighting against the 40-year hegemony of the Fourth Republic, which was in power before his era, and the opposition is fighting against the hegemony of Chávez's regime that was in power for 14 years. In addition to that, the research notes that both the Chavistas and the opposition are trying to appeal to the people by competing with each other that they know what the people want and, in fact, are together with the people (cf. Canovan 2005;

Laclau 2005a; 2005b). These points are demonstrated by the frames “supreme leader,” and “united.” Also, the frame “micro level power” appeals to the people but with a socialist touch. This makes both the government and the opposition populists if interpreted through Laclau’s (2005a; 2005b) theory where populism is defined by constructing the very sense of the people.

Democracy – populism versus leftism

As mentioned earlier, populism may not be enough to explain the Venezuelan conflict since populism is not a full ideology but a “thin” one (Stanley 2008). Since socialism (of 21st century) is the ideology among Chávez’s supporters, it may be used to explain some of the frames. Kitzberger (2012, 130) lists some critical leftist ideas such as hegemony, voice inequality, race and class biases in the media, popular empowerment, and democratization. These ideas explain some of the frames found in the data. For example, in case 1, the frame “everyone counts” of *Correo del Orinoco* can be thought of as an expression of leftist politics. It emphasizes every individual; it is not just the masses but individual persons form the masses and everyone has equal rights in a society. The frame is part of popular empowerment, as is also the frame “power to the people.” It addresses the issue of voice inequality by empowering the people. This frame also addresses the unfulfilled demands of every individual, which is the base of populism. People have to feel they have been noticed. Frame “at least we know who to blame” of the same newspaper tackles the issue of class bias. It is the wealthy upper classes that are blamed on the national and international level, the ones who own private property, land or means of production, etc.

In the same case, *Tal Cual* is talking about the attack to democracy and a path towards a dictatorship. This can be seen as a way to respond to the government’s actions and as an attempt to access the public sphere in a situation of weak parties. Since the opposition does not share the view of Bolivarian revolution with the government, it interprets the government actions as restrictions to democracy. The weak trust in the political system and political parties, which are one of the preconditions of populism (Panizza 2005, 11-13), are the reason why the media becomes an important arena to mobilize public support (Kitzberger 2012, 133). These may be also the reasons why the opinions culminate and are phrased so bluntly.

The vagueness of populist rhetoric is explained by the unfulfilled demands and the empty signifier becomes a symbol of them (Laclau 2005a). In the data, the texts of namely *Correo del Orinoco* are sometimes conflicting. For example, in case 1 on the same page, it may be said the reason for the law is the extraordinary climate that calls for extraordinary measures. Thus, it is said that the only reason for the law is to help the people and the opposition’s accusation that there are other reasons is false. Yet, at the same time it is said the law is used to deepen the revolution since it is also stated the law enables a necessary implementation of the legislation to deepen the socialist model

and in this way develop a Bolivarian revolution in favor of the people. It is also said the law is necessary because it is impossible to discuss it with the opposition, and in the upcoming parliament government parties will not have the majority vote. This is exactly what the opposition was accusing the parliament of. When finding an explanation for this, on the one hand it should be noted Chavismo is not a united movement and there are several different voices within it, and these different voices do not have their own mediums to use to speak out (cf. Ellner 2008; see also chapter 2.1). Thus, it is possible the conflicting voices in *Correo del Orinoco* are a reflection of this. On the other hand, it should be remembered that according to Laclau's (2005a) theory of populism, vague rhetoric is explained by the need to answer different demands at the same time. This way the newspaper may be trying to answer the different demands prevailing amongst the supporters, which results in conflicting texts.

5.2 Construction of populism in newspaper images

In this comparative case study of Venezuelan newspaper images, news coverage of two Venezuelan newspapers representing extreme opposing political views are studied. The focus is on the images accompanying the articles because through them it is possible to emphasize existing political messages or create new ones. First, the images of the government-funded newspaper *Correo del Orinoco* are analyzed through the lens of political endeavor. The main research question is how political and populist messages are constructed in newspaper images. Then, as a comparison, the anti-Chavista newspaper *Tal Cual* is examined, which presents an opposing political viewpoint. The images are first analyzed by content analysis and then a few representative pictures are selected for visual close reading done by visual rhetoric analysis (see chapter 4).

5.2.1 POWER OF IMAGES

Visual images are no different than written texts or sounds since all of them form a system of representations and are constructed of signs. A picture may present a hat thus the image is a sign of a hat. However, we all more or less share a map of meanings if we come from the same context, i.e. we know that a hat is a beret and it is a red one. Thus it may have also other cultural and historical connotations (cf. Hall 1997). This is what visual rhetoric analysis is interested in.

A body of research has investigated how images affect decision-making and voters' assessment of politicians (Barrett & Barrington 2005a; Mandell & Shaw 1973; Maoz 2012; Rosenberg & al. 1991; Rosenberg & McCafferty 1987). Newspaper photographs affect voters' beliefs regarding political candidates' personal traits and the voters' general impression of the candidates.

As a result, images also affect their decision whether or not to vote for the candidate (Barrett & Barrington 2005a). A single photograph can change voter attitudes towards a candidate. However, a reader of a newspaper is not only affected by a single picture since newspapers tend to publish a series of favorable or unfavorable images of their preferred politicians (Barrett & Barrington 2005b). This reinforces the impression the readers have, or are being given, of these political candidates.

The interests of different actors such as media, political elites and the people, may prevail in newspaper pictures. The final pictures that appear in the pages of a newspaper are always a conscious, chosen truth of the editorial process. Political news influences the ability to act as a citizen by informing and giving models to interpret events.

There are many different ways to change the perceived image of a candidate using photographs. Camera angles may affect the perceived dominance of the photographed candidate (e.g. a low angle makes the person look taller) (Mandell & Shaw 1973). Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 146) emphasize the interaction between represented participant and interactive participant, which may also be the viewer of the picture. In a low angle, the represented participant is perceived to have more power than the interactive participant and vice versa with a high angle. Similarly, eye level is perceived as equal power relations between the participants (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996, 146). Activeness also affects the perceived power relations. An active subject is often perceived as more powerful compared to a static one (Mandell & Shaw 1973).

Other ways of altering an image in favor of a candidate are by selecting or emphasizing particular backgrounds, expressions, and clothing (Rosenberg & al. 1991). For example, direction of the gaze may alter the perceived image. A person not looking at the camera represents him/her as an "item of information, objects of contemplation." Of course, different photographic genres have different kinds of practices, i.e. in newspaper photographs, the photographed do not usually look directly into the camera in order to create a more objective feel to the piece of news. Similarly, a direct gaze is addressing the viewer. The represented participant can also address the viewer with his/her body language. Frontal angle invites the viewer, talks to him/her, even though the represented participant is not looking at him/her directly. Oblique angle says the opposite. It underlines detachment between the photographed and the scene/the viewer. (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996, 124, 143.)

Dumitrescu's study (2010) of political candidate posters shows that major party candidates are more likely than minor candidates to use nonverbal cues to show their suitability for the elected position. This may indicate the candidates with better resources may be aware of the impact of visual representations and therefore they are more likely to use it in their favor. This also suggests stronger abilities to influence in different power relations.

5.2.2 CONSTRUCTING POPULISM IN VENEZUELAN NEWSPAPER IMAGES

The data consists of 35 newspaper articles dealing with a case of an “enabling law” from *Correo del Orinoco* and 29 articles from *Tal Cual*. These numbers also include cartoons, but several articles where the case is just mentioned were excluded. In *Correo del Orinoco*, there are 61 pictures (see appendix 6). They were first analyzed using content analysis. After defining common characteristics this way, the most representative pictures were chosen for visual close reading. A similar process was performed to analyze the *Tal Cual* articles, which included 20 pictures.

Content analysis is mainly used to distinguish suitable examples for the visual close reading. In *Correo del Orinoco*, there are 21 actual full articles with photographs, and on the cover there is a headline and a little insert with one or more pictures 6 times. All these numbers tell us the newspaper considers the case important since it has large coverage of it and several images. In fact, most of the articles with pictures have several of them and on the cover there are up to six pictures per page under a heading. That is also the reason why the amount of pictures grew so large. Of course, many of them are close-ups or extreme close-ups (23 %) not showing anything else other than the person’s face. Politicians of Chavismo (31 %) are the most common actors in the pictures. They may be photographed with people or other politicians, but what is striking is that even when they are with other persons there is not much interaction between them. They are passively standing or listening. The difference with President Chávez is striking. He is present the third most (18 %) of all the actors. What is interesting is he seems to be almost always presented with other people, either with politicians or the people, and he is always interacting, talking, touching, actively listening and showing it with his body language. The people are photographed often, too (30 %). However, many of these pictures are shot from a distance and showing the ruined landscape after the rains.

In *Tal Cual*, only 14 articles have a photograph and there are three cover photos. *Tal Cual* has several drawings, and often on the cover too, since its editorial is usually accompanied with a cartoon. However, I left out the cartoons from the closer analysis and concentrated on the photographs since it is easier to compare images within one genre.

Correo del Orinoco

For the visual close reading, the cover of the December 15 issue was chosen because it shows a typical *Correo del Orinoco* editorial choice (image 1). On the cover, the main piece of news is titled “Economic impact of the crisis caused by the rains rises up to 10.000 million dollars — The Parliament approves tomorrow the enabling law.” Next to the title there is a small picture of two Chavista politicians: Vice President Elias Jaua and Speaker of the Parliament Cilia Flores. They are looking at each other so it seems they both

agree on the subject and take it seriously. Cilia Flores has her hand on an official folder as if indicating the parliament, i.e. the democratically elected representatives of the people, is in charge of the decision-making and the MPs are the ones having the final word in this case. They both are wearing grey suits and Mr. Jaua has a red and pink tie, which is an interesting choice since red is the color of socialism and Chavismo but, together with pink stripes, it creates a softer image.

MIERCOLES 15 de Diciembre de 2010 | No. 466 | Año 2 | Bt.1 | CARACAS | www.correodelorinoco.gov.ve | Depósito legal: pp2009012CL32 **La artillería del pensamiento**

Impacto económico de crisis causada por las lluvias supera 10.000 millones de dólares



Asamblea Nacional aprobará mañana la Ley Habilitante

El vicepresidente Ejecutivo, Elias Jaua, entregó el texto a la jefa del Poder Legislativo, Cilia Flores. El Presidente pidió poderes especiales por 12 meses. Diputadas y diputados iniciaron ayer el debate de la normativa, la cual incluye nueve ámbitos: atención de necesidades humanas; infraestructura, transporte y servicios públicos; vivienda y hábitat; ordenación territorial, desarrollo integral y uso de la tierra urbana y rural; financiero y tributario; seguridad ciudadana y jurídica; seguridad y defensa integral, cooperación internacional y sistema socioeconómico. El Parlamento se declaró en sesión permanente. El instrumento será debatido con las damnificadas y damnificados. Foto Yoset Montes AVN

Impacto
Ministro Sesto tiene la tarea de construir 22 mil viviendas en año y medio

Economía
Ejecutivo fijó kilo de café en 23,88 bolívares

Tema del Día
Unión Europea y EEUU aplican restricciones a internet

Por la inclusión
Jóvenes socialistas manifestaron hoy a las puertas del Parlamento para exigir la aprobación de una nueva Ley de Universidades.
Foto Miguel Romero



La solidaridad de Correa

Los presidentes de Venezuela y Ecuador, Hugo Chávez y Rafael Correa, visitaron a las refugiadas y los refugiados radicados en Fuerte Tiuna y en la Casa Amarilla. El Mandatario ecuatoriano trajo 11,2 toneladas de alimentos y otros insumos, con lo que sumó un total de 41 toneladas de ayuda humanitaria para atender la contingencia en la Patria de Bolívar. El jefe del Estado pidió a Citgo comprar otras 5 mil carpas en Estados Unidos para acoger a más personas afectadas por las precipitaciones.
Fotos Prensa Presidencial

Picture 1 The cover of *Correo del Orinoco*, December 15, 2010

Underneath, however, is a totally other kind of picture. It is a picture of President Chávez in the middle of a crowd. Together with him is the President of Ecuador, Rafael Correa, who is positioned in the center of the photograph. Correa's presence underlines Chávez's importance and the urgency of the issue: even a president from another country came to witness the crisis and to show "solidarity" (as the subtitle tells us). Chávez is on the left side of the picture leaning towards the people with a worried and determined, but caring, look on his face. He is taking this thing seriously!

Interestingly, the refugees do not seem unhappy even though they have faced a terrible natural disaster. The woman Chávez is reaching to is even laughing and holding a child in her arms. All the others seem to be gazing at Chávez with curiosity. The people in the picture represent different ages, ranging from children to adults. They also represent different racial features

and genders. This emphasizes the fact Chávez is “everyman’s” president. He represents “the people”⁹⁷ of Venezuela. As if to point out the fact he is not an elitist leader but just like them, Chávez is in the crowd and the people can actually touch him. In the bottom-left corner of the picture we can even see a hand grabbing Chávez’s arm. People are not afraid to get close to their leader.

Chávez is often identified as the father of his nation, and this fatherly figure is also shown in this image. He is reaching from above like a savior to the people to solve their problems and to listen to them.

There are many populist symbols in the picture. The Venezuelan flag, of course, is a sign of patriotism and the Venezuelan people. Chávez is wearing, as usual, a green military jacket. This underlines his army background; he is a man of orders, discipline and authority, but the army is also where his revolution started (see chapter 2.1). He is wearing a red beret. The color red is always present in the clothing of Chávez. Red symbolizes socialism in general, but specifically Chávez’s socialism of the 21st century and the Bolivarian revolution. Also positioning Chávez on the left of the photograph may bring a connotation to leftist politics and the people reaching out to him from the right may be interpreted as symbolic.

Usually, pictures meant to emphasize the power and dominance of a person are taken from a low angle, with the camera pointing up at the figure (cf. Mandell & Shaw 1973). Thus, the camera angle of this picture is interesting since it is taken from above the people. This way the big crowd is shown better with Chávez among the crowd (cf. case study 2 frame “supreme leader”). The power relation is constructed by other means. Chávez is still creating a powerful image since he is looking and leaning down towards the people. However, there is an additional emphasis on Chávez as “one of the people” rather than being dislocated from them by his power in the way that a low angle tends to isolate a figure from the viewer by suggesting height and how the figure is “above” the others. Chávez’s dominance is also highlighted because he is undeniably the center of attention amongst the people in the picture. President Correa, who is located in the center of the image, is looking at the people who then are looking at President Chávez. Thus, the direction of the image points to Chávez. Moreover, Correa’s presence emphasizes the importance of Chávez and his cause since he has come from another country to support Chávez.

The structure of the page is constructed so that Chávez does not seem to be taking part in the political decision-making that surrounds the enabling law per se. He just asked the parliament to get their permission to help his country fast. It seems to be the parliament’s job and responsibility to deal with the legal matter. Chávez is already there in the field, active and getting his hands dirty. This is also what came up in the content analysis. The most common angle was the politicians making sure of the content of the law and

⁹⁷As mentioned before, the people does not include the whole nation in populism.

the third one was Chávez taking action for the wellbeing of the people. These angles are underlined with the visual images.

Tal Cual

Tal Cual features a picture from the same event as *Correo del Orinoco*: the encounter of Cilia Flores and Elias Jaua (published December 15, 2010) (see image 2). Comparing two seemingly similar images shows how, with minor details, the editorial staff can make a totally different kind of point. In the picture from *Tal Cual*, Cilia Flores' hand is not placed on top of the folder so it does not become the center of attention and does not make the same kind of point as in the other picture. In the picture from *Tal Cual*, Elias Jaua is talking but does not seem to show much emotion. Cilia Flores is looking at Jaua with an attentive expression on her face. On the wall behind Flores there is an image of Chávez located at the back on the top right corner of the picture. An interesting detail that is not shown on the cover of *Correo del Orinoco* but on the inner pages of the newspaper, is that it has another image of the same event there, too. In this picture behind Flores and Jaua, the picture of Chávez is placed between the two politicians as if Chávez was part of the equation. In the picture of *Tal Cual*, Chávez is up there "watching" but is not part of the interaction. The two politicians seem more passive in the picture of *Tal Cual*, as if passing the law was an order from a higher level.

The other picture chosen from *Tal Cual* for the comparison is a photograph accompanying the article (States of) "Lara and Miranda oppose the Enabling law" (published December 16, 2010) (see image 3). The governors of Miranda and Lara are walking side by side and talking. The image was chosen because it forms a good pair with the picture of Chávez in *Correo del Orinoco*. The structure of both of the articles is similar. A head of state (president or governor) comes to visit the impacted area and offer help. The governor Miranda Henrique Capriles Radonski is a member of an opposition party and later became a presidential candidate against Chávez and Maduro. Since in chapter 5.1 we concluded that both parties of the political conflict – the government and the opposition – may be described as populists, choosing the picture of Capriles Radonski enables comparison of the construction of the two different populisms. In the picture, Capriles is more active than the governor Lara Henri Falcon since Capriles is explaining something with his hands. Falcon, who is an ex-member of the Chavista block but who later turned to the MUD, is more passive, listening. He even has his other hand in a pocket to underline his passiveness. A man at the back between them is also listening to Capriles since he is looking at Capriles over his glasses. This emphasizes the importance of Capriles' message. Both of the governors are dressed casually. Falcon has a blue shirt and blue jeans. Capriles is wearing a cap and sportswear. He does not wear anything that would be associated with elitism, of which Chávez accuses the opposition. Even his watch is a plastic one and he has stubble on his face. There is no red (which is associated with

Chavismo) in the picture. Instead, there is a lot of blue (including the clothing of Falcon), which is associated with the opposition. The two men are walking away from the crowd in the background or, maybe, better said, they are leading the crowd. They are walking towards the camera but neither of them is looking at the camera as it is typical in newspaper images in order to create objectivity. Their eyes are wandering to something that is not shown in the picture. However, as their bodies are in a frontal angle they are addressing the viewer of the picture, and they seem united with each other since they are walking side by side.

JAJA ASEGURÓ QUE EN 15 DÍAS COMENZARÁN A EMITIR DECRETOS LEYES

AN da carta blanca al Gobierno Nacional

El proyecto de Ley Habilitante entró al Parlamento con una temporalidad de 12 meses

El Ejecutivo podrá legislar en 9 ámbitos, entre los que se incluyen seguridad y defensa

DAYIMAR AYALA ALTUVE

Por un periodo de 12 meses el presidente Hugo Chávez podrá legislar mediante una ley Habilitante, tal como lo anunciara el viernes pasado. Ayer en la Asamblea Nacional, el Vicepresidente Ejecutivo Elias Jaua entregó el proyecto de Ley que fue recibido por Cilia Flores, presidenta del Parlamento.

El Gobierno pretende atacar 9 puntos, amparándose bajo el esquema de las emergencias por las lluvias.

El proyecto reza que el Ejecutivo Nacional enumerará su cuarta Habilitante en la atención a los afectados por las lluvias, infraestructura, transporte, servicios públicos, ordenación territorial, desarrollo integral, uso de la tierra rural y urbana, sistema financiero y tributario, seguridad ciudadana y jurídica, seguridad y defensa integral, cooperación internacional y todo el sistema socioeconómico de la nación.

"Dentro de los próximos 15 días empezaremos



Chávez tendrá los poderes plenos que le otorga la AN para legislar en diversas materias. (RENER OTTO ARCE/VE)

a emitir decretos leyes para responder a las emergencias", así lo señaló Elias Jaua, aunque no pudo determinar el número de textos jurídicos que se podrían emitir durante la temporalidad de la habilitante. Asimismo, destacó que el lapso de 12 meses que solicitó el Presidente se debe a las profundas medidas que se deben tomar para subsanar la crisis que dejaron los desastres naturales.

CILIA DIJO AMÉN

La presidenta de la AN recibió de manos de Jaua el proyecto y anunció que el Parlamento se declaró a partir de ayer en sesión permanente. Cabe destacar que el periodo legislativo establecido para las sesiones extraordinarias vence hoy y a partir de mañana comenzarán las sesiones extraordinarias pa-

ra cumplir con la agenda legislativa que exigen desde instancias superiores.

La primera discusión de la Habilitante comenzó ayer con la urgencia reglamentaria para ser sancionada en el menor tiempo posible. La parlamentaria aseguró que mañana jueves la Ley Habilitante ya estaría sancionada.

El oficialismo se ampara en el artículo 203 de la Constitución que establece "Son leyes habilitantes las sancionadas por la Asamblea Nacional por las 3/5 partes de sus integrantes, a fin de establecer las directrices, propósitos y marcos de las materias que se delegan al Presidente o Presidenta de la República con rango y valor de Ley. Las leyes habilitantes deben establecer el plazo de su ejercicio".

De igual forma, Flores desestimó los señalamien-

tos que dicen que una ley habilitante no podría extenderse más allá del 5 de enero (fecha en la que inicia una nueva gestión de diputados), al decir: "Si es como señalan los sectores de la oposición burguesa, ninguna de las leyes aprobadas durante este tiempo tendrían vigencia para el año que viene, incluyendo la Ley de Presupuesto Fiscal para el 2011".

SORPRESA, SORPRESA

Las comisiones de la AN seguirán emitiendo proyectos de Ley durante el tiempo establecido de las sesiones extraordinarias. "Las leyes que vayan llegando las iremos incorporando a las sesiones", finalizó la presidenta del Parlamento. Al cierre de esta edición continuaba el debate de la Ley Habilitante y la propuesta de Iris Varela de extender su vigencia a 24 meses.

Picture 2 Flores and Jaua in *Tal Cual* December 15, 2010

HENRIQUE CAPRILES DENUNCIÓ QUE EL EJECUTIVO LE DEBE A SU DESPACHO BS. 400 MILLONES

Lara y Miranda rechazan Habilitante

■ Mandatarios regionales objetaron el paquetazo de leyes que pondría en riesgo la democracia del país

DANIEL PALACIOS YARRA

"Desde Lara sentimos y sus frimos como Miranda". Con esta frase ayer Henri Falcón oficializó la entrega de 60 toneladas de alimentos, acopiados por su gobernación, para los damnificados de Miranda. Dichas provisiones fueron recibidas por su homólogo Henrique Capriles Radonski en la cancha deportiva Parque Miranda, en el municipio Sucre. Ambos mandatarios manifestaron su interés de establecer relaciones solidarias, para solventar las consecuencias de las recientes lluvias que han maltratado a la geografía mirandina.

El gobernador Capriles Radonski denunció que el Ejecutivo nacional debería a Miranda Bs. 400 millones. "Este martes enviamos un oficio solicitando Bs. 320 millones, pero si el Gobierno honrara su compromiso, no tendríamos que requerir recursos extraordinarios", dijo el gobernador mirandino, y precisó que dicha deuda correspondería a 2009 y 2010. Asimismo, manifestó que el Poder Legislativo nacional no es cónsono con la situación que vive Venezuela.

"Mientras estamos superando una emergencia, en este momento la Asamblea Nacional está aprobando una ley de medios de comunicación. ¿Qué tiene que ver una Ley Resorte con la emergencia de lluvias?", cuestionó el gobernador de Miranda.

Sobre este particular Henri Falcón considera que la Ley Habilitante "no



Henrique Capriles Radonski y Henri Falcón en un centro de acopio en Parque Miranda. HENRI OTTO SUZUKI

tiene nada que ver con la resolución de crisis de algunas regiones. Eso es un parapeño que monta el Gobierno con la firme intención de desmontar gobernaciones y alcaldías. Se trata de un paquete de leyes que se le va a imponer al país para profundizar lo que hasta ahora no se conoce de la revolución y el socialismo".

El dirigente centrooccidental también fastidió el incremento al Impuesto al Valor Agregado (IVA). "El Gobierno tiene un gran desorden en sus finanzas. Si tuviera que hacerse una consideración sobre el IVA, pues debería fortalecerse la hacienda estatal, para que ese recurso IVA se quede en las regiones. Por eso, ¿cómo entender que un Gobierno va a au-

mentar los impuestos, cuando ha tenido los mejores ingresos petroleros?", discurrió el gobernador Falcón.

SOLIDARIDAD ENTRE REGIONES

Capriles Radonski reconoció que Henri Falcón haya hecho una pausa en su agenda para trasladarse a Caracas y concretar la donación de 60 toneladas de alimentos, que se transportaron en cinco camiones desde Lara, y que se sumarán a las 300 toneladas de comida y 120 mil litros de agua entregados, ofrecidos a los damnificados mirandinos, especialmente en Barlovento. Hasta la fecha el plan 'Arriba Miranda' ha registrado la inversión de Bs. 138 mil en 41 créditos, la entrega de 300 enseros y

12.196 personas atendidas en consultas médicas.

"Nos llamaron la atención las gráficas donde Henrique sale casi con el agua al cuello, y eso debe llamarnos a la reflexión a los que hacemos política. Es importante dejar a un lado el sectarismo para entender la necesidad de la gente. Reconozco y aplaudo la iniciativa del gobierno de Miranda. Lo que vemos en este centro de acopio es muestra de organización, desempeño y una muestra de solidaridad", dijo el gobernador Falcón en referencia al centro de provisiones de Parque Miranda.

"Que la Divina Pastora y Dios le premie tus acciones", dijo agradecido Capriles Radonski a su par larense.

Picture 3 Capriles Radonski and Falcon in *Tal Cual* December 16, 2010

5.2.3 FORMING THE UNITY

Both journalism and populism are trying to create a common ground, address the "us" (cf. Laclau 2005a; Sonwalkar 2005). In populism the feeling of unity among the people is created with many symbols – empty and floating signifiers – which are present in the visual images. An example of the floating signifier is a flag or a crowd of people. The Venezuelan flag represents a different kind of nationalism and unity against the opposition and Chávez's voters. Also, a varied crowd seen in the example signifies different meanings to the different parties. For Chávez's voters to be presented together with the

president, it symbolizes that different kinds of people – no matter what age, gender or color – lean towards their leader and form the people of the Bolivarian nation.

The strongest empty signifier in the pictures is, of course, Chávez himself. He is represented as something different than other politicians. He is not part of the elite but among the people. Yet, still retaining his power and being higher than ordinary people. In *Correo del Orinoco*, Chávez is often represented as an active figure. Being active may be perceived as having more power (Mandell & Shaw 1973). In *Tal Cual*, the opposition leader is the active one, suggesting that it is him, rather than the other governor, who is the more powerful one. However, even though he is represented as more active in the picture, he is not as active as President Chávez since there is no interaction. It is not shown to whom or what either of the governors are looking at. Yet, Capriles is made the center of attention in the picture since the man at the back is looking at him. At the same time, Chávez is the center of attention in the *Correo del Orinoco* picture.

Other signifiers in the pictures are colors and clothing. Chávez has been using them systematically over a long period of time (see beret in chapter 2). Even the red in his beret is a strong red and not a blended one like in Jaua's tie, meaning he is determined and has a clear, strong vision of socialism in the 21st century. The signifiers of *Tal Cual*'s picture are not so politically charged, but there are some present, such as colors, clothing, and habitus of the persons. As seen in the frame analysis of chapter 5.1, the opposition of Venezuela is trying to distinguish from the elitist Fourth Republic. This is also visible in the picture of Capriles since he is wearing casual clothing and accessories that cannot be linked with the rich elite. The opposition leader attempts to oppose the image of himself that Chávez is trying to create. He does not look anything like the leader of the bourgeois. Also, the use of the cap became a signifier of the anti-Chavistas since the Venezuelan flag cap was often used in many occasions. The cap also indicates that Capriles is a fan of baseball, which may be considered a national sport in Venezuela. This makes him easier to approach. However, it may also emphasize he is capable of doing the job of leading the country to a better future as baseball is a masculine sport and masculinity is associated with certain dominant and active features. Indeed, Capriles is presented as an active leader in the picture since he is walking united with another politician and leading the crowd; he knows what to do and how to solve the situation. The symbols, here called signifiers, homogenize a highly heterogeneous situation.

Comparing Chávez's and Capriles Radonski's pictures, it becomes evident that Chávez is part of the people, which came through in the "Chavista" frames in chapter 5.1. The people in the picture were not aware of the photographers so in this way were not performing whereas Capriles and Falcon were clearly more aware of the photographer(s) in front of them. Their picture seems more set up while Chávez's picture seems a more spontaneous event. This, of course, does not need to be true. It is just the image that is

presented in the newspapers. Also, the picture of Chávez shows everything within the picture frame. Everything that the people are looking at is shown in the picture, unlike in the picture of Capriles and Falcon, which seems to imply there is something else happening in the event, something the reader cannot see since the two politicians are gazing outside the frame. The picture of Chávez contains everything there is to see. It leaves out no mysteries to the reader.

Since in journalistic photographs it is not usual to look directly into the camera, the closeness of the viewer and the participant has to be constructed by other means. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 121-130) suggest the direct gaze to the viewer implies connection between the participant and the viewer. In the picture of Chávez in *Correo del Orinoco*, this invitation to the viewer – addressing him/her – is done through the friendly caring gaze between the woman and Chávez. It says there is a connection between the people and Chávez. To emphasize this connection, people have come close to him and even grab his arm. Close personal distance implies there is an intimate relation with the persons touching (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996, 130). Therefore, the picture implies there is an intimate, personal connection between the president and his people. This can be compared to the emotional unity presented in case study 2 frame “supreme leader” (see chapter 5.1.2).

In comparison, in the picture of Capriles and Falcon the two governors have their backs turned towards the people in the background. However, their bodies are in a frontal angle towards the camera, which implies they talk to the readers of *Tal Cual* and address them directly. Moreover, their picture is taken from eye level which may be interpreted as if the viewer is equal to them (cf. Kress & van Leeuwen 1996, 146).

In the pictures of Cilia Flores and Elias Jaua, the gaze and angle make a big difference. In the picture of *Tal Cual*, both of them are sideways on an oblique angle thus distancing them from the viewer. In addition to that, Jaua is not looking at Flores but outside of the picture frame. There is no connection between them. In comparison, the image of *Correo del Orinoco* is taken so that Jaua is almost at a frontal angle. He invites the viewers to the picture. Moreover, the gaze between Jaua and Flores makes the image more intense and more dynamic.

5.3 Concluding remarks

In this chapter the focus was on how different representations of power present in the antagonistic conflict of Venezuela are constructed, legitimated and challenged by different societal actors in the press. It was found that the context of the case studies is populist politics to the extent that even both of the competing power blocs may be stated as populist following the criteria of Laclau (2005a). Chávez and his sympathizers and the Venezuelan opposition both are trying to raise a counter-hegemony against the existing one and ap-

peal to the people. The difference between the two was they defined the people differently and were fighting against different hegemonies. That is also why it was important to focus not only on “Chavista” media (*CdO*) but also on the more balanced (*UN*) and opposition-minded (*Uni & TC*).

The people of Chavismo was constructed on the micro level. They have a direct connection with their leader, and what unites them is not necessarily a socio-economic class but their conviction to the revolution, the will to change the power structure of society by empowering the citizens instead of large corporations. This direct connection with Chávez is also demonstrated in the images. The “people” of the opposition consists of “Venezuelans.” They are a varied group that is united in their fight against authoritarian Chavismo and want to reclaim democracy in the country. Thus, the Chavismo is fighting against the hegemony of the “oligarchs” or “bourgeois” and the opposition against “Chavismo.”

As the media may be thought of as a powerful element, the media texts may be thought of as a result of a power struggle of several different actors, including the political and economic actors, and also the different media actors like owners, journalists, and editorial staff. For the politicians, through the media it is possible to address the potential and already-existing voters. Because of this it is important to deliver their discourse. If a medium is trying to follow neutral professional journalism like most of the media (cf. Mancini 2000), they need to report news events in a balanced way including both sides of the story. However, since the media has editorial power they are able to use editorial techniques such as quoting, sarcasm, and layout to highlight a certain stance. Also, political leaders have skills to present themselves in a desired way in the images (cf. Dumitrescu 2010).

Populism arises in a highly heterogeneous society and in order to harmonize the situation populist symbols – signifiers – are needed. These create stability and a feeling of unity. Chávez is a strong symbol himself. On the one hand, he is more active than other Chavista leaders and represents his people, and since he is not one of the elite but interacts with people, this suggests he is one of them. On the other hand, the opposition is emphasizing unity in their discourse, but in the image Capriles and Falcon are barely interacting with each other. Neither their bodies nor faces confront each other even though they are speaking together. As in the opposition frames, they are trying to diminish the gap between the political leaders and ordinary people by their casual clothing, but by their actions they are isolating themselves from the people since they have their backs turned to them. They are talking about the problems the people are facing and trying to help them, but are not among them like Chávez. Instead, they do address the viewer. Chávez does not distance himself from the people and their emotions like Capriles. Capriles’ approach is more traditional and he is trying to keep to the point.

Cohesion among the population is created by highlighting unity and bringing out the “other.” The frame of the “other” was strong, especially in

both of the extreme newspapers (*CdO* and *TC*). This also highlights the antagonism, which is prevalent in populism.

Nevertheless, it would be over simplifying to say that it is only populism that affects the content of the newspapers. For example, leftist ideology has a strong impact in the way the government supported *Correo del Orinoco* explains the world (Salojärvi 2014). However, based on the data of this research it may be said there are many populist elements found in the content of Venezuelan mainstream print media. Yet, the print media also has editorial power. Their power may just be more discreet. Thus, it would be interesting to know how it affects the readers.

6 (De)Constructing the political conflict and the media's role in it

One of the aims of the research is to answer the question of what discourses of political struggle there are among media actors and how they construct their “common reality” in the antagonistic conflict. Media actors are here understood in a broad sense in order to cut across the major political divisions. Finally, to detect reasons behind different points of views, collective memory is focused on (chapter 6.2) to explain some of the findings.

6.1 Media actors' interviews and the role of media

As a result of using Burke's dramatism there were found four different categories of how media actors construct the situation and which societal actors they emphasize in their narrative. These categories reveal the difficulty of attaining hegemony.

6.1.1 FOUR WAYS TO CONSTRUCT THE POLITICAL CONFLICT

The analysis of the interviews was done by answering five central questions – What? Where? Who? How? Why? – according to Burke's (1946) dramatism (see chapter 4). It was needed to find out how the interviewees talk about certain topics, what they emphasize and why. Based on Galtung's (1999) model, the focus was on different societal actors: the State, State media, private media, and civil society/community media. In addition to this it was needed to study the interviewees' point of view of democracy and the role of the media.

The specific questions posed under each theme were:

- Democracy: How does the person define democracy? How does he/she see that democracy has changed in Venezuela and how is it working in real life?
- Role of media: What is the role of media in an ideal democratic society? What is the role of media in a Venezuelan society?
- State: What is the role of state in relation to media?
- State media: What is the role and position of state media?
- Private media: What is the role and position of the private media?
- Civil society: What is the role and position of civil society?
- Collective memory: Which historical events does the person see as turning points and how?

All these questions were posed under the precondition we already know *what* the so-called situation is according to the interviewee. After studying with the pentadic analysis of *what* we are talking about we can continue to ask more specific questions and describe them (*how*).

The four categories found were: 1) The people, 2) Media, 3) State, and 4) Journalists. One of these categories was clearly present in each of the interviews and they were quite easy to detect. However, it should be noted that in many of the interviews other categories were also present besides the dominant one. This highlights even more the presence of the categories in discourse and their importance. Yet, there were some interviews that were a bit difficult to categorize, e.g. one interviewee emphasized the new opportunities that the State gives the people (Interview no. 7, eventually placed in category 1 since the action of the people was there) and not the people themselves taking an initiative. Another one that mostly emphasized the lack of freedoms and responsibility (interview no. 5), and another highlighting the conflict between economic interests and the interests of PSUV (Interview no. 31) (both placed in category 3 since the role of the State was dominant).

After identifying the categories I focused on what the interviewee's opinion about democracy was and the role of media and different societal actors within them. While analyzing the categories it became clear that the interviewees construct the situation on three different levels.

Values → Action ↔ Consequences

The first level is the *values* of the participants of the conflict. They justified their own actions but also explained the actions of other actors with values they assumed the other actors possessed. This level is the basis of everything. The second level was *action*, which rose from the values and was a visible consequence of the values. The third level was a *consequence* of the action, which meant the reaction of the opponent or other actors to the action. Sometimes the consequences generated a response to them and a vicious circle of consequences and responses started.

Next I will introduce the categories and their content, including their view of democracy and the role of media and the three different levels to perceive the situation.

The people

The first category was divided into two different groups (see appendix 7): "People taking power" (1 in the appendix 7) and "humanity" (2 in the appendix 7). Both of them say that the system is changing but they differ in the significance of the change. The first group, "people taking power," say that common Venezuelans are tired of the power play of the two dominant sides and therefore are becoming active. They have managed to take control over

the issues that matter to them little by little. This is shown in the new laws set by the government and new media regulations.

The main difference between the two groups and the reason why they are separated into to subgroups is that the second group, “humanity,” emphasizes it is not only the change in the system but is all about changing the worldview into a more humane one. This group does not see the change as something external but connects it to the internal personal change and global humanistic tendencies.

“The theory is that if we are making a change and how they (opposition) deny seeing the reality of it, simply they do not care. And not only the change in the level of a structure, there is a change in the level of being a human being here among us in Venezuela.”⁹⁸

(Interview no. 18, group 2)

This is closely related to the events that Ellner (2008, 130-131) described as calling for a creation of the “new socialist man” that is conscious of society and oneself (see chapter 3.1) and about “humane communication” (Interview no. 18). The interviewees (including some in the group 1) often refer to the theories of Freire (see e.g. Freire 1972).

The interviewees in the category are persons who could be described as Chávez’s sympathizers. They come from state, alternative and community media, or are organized citizens. For group 1 democracy is all about participation and during Chávez’s era Venezuela was getting closer to that ideal (cf. chapter 3.2). For group 2 democracy is more about attaining a “good life” instead of just participation. During Chávez’s era there had been little baby steps taken in that direction. In this sense this group is related to Valencia Ramírez’s (2005, 80) remark that certain Chavistas are “not solely dedicated to ensuring that Chávez remains in office but also carrying out important social work.” Before Chávez, common people and their problems were not recognized and they did not matter since they were not seen as political actors. Chávez, however, changed this. The problems may maintain the same as before but the way of thinking has changed drastically according to group 2. Already this tells us that it is all about the values. Everyone should matter and be treated equally.

“And in the case of Venezuela, they (opposition) have promoted a coup d’etat, a series of totally false and anti-humane values, discrimination because of homosexuality, for gender, for color of one’s skin, for the persona, promote values more evil and what do they have to do with the values of humanity? And they have nothing

⁹⁸ “La teoría es que sí estamos haciendo un cambio y como ellos niegan ver la realidad de esto, simplemente no les importa. Y no solamente un cambio en el nivel de estructura, hay un cambio en el nivel interno del ser humano, de nosotros aquí en Venezuela.”

to do with socialism. And, on the other hand, socialism of 21st century promotes wellbeing of humans which is the true democracy.”⁹⁹

(Interview no. 1, group 2)

In the category, the role of the media in an ideal democracy is to deliver truthful information and enable participation of the citizens. This was not happening in Venezuela before because both the State and the private media were just promoting their own interests. Information is power and that is why the citizens should be producing it¹⁰⁰. This may be a response to the neo-liberalist politics of big corporations of the 1990s (see chapter 2.2). The old media system needs to be replaced so the people can be liberated from the media's control. The citizens are slowly starting to produce the information they want and need.

The “big” media has transformed into political and economic actors that do not listen to people. They only respond to each other (especially VTV y Globovisión) and take care of their own interests.

“The state media form a bloc that responds to the interests of the government and institutions, and they are bias towards the ministerial line or they have a certain editorial line, logically in favour of the government. This is constructed with principles of a structure of power”.¹⁰¹

(Interview no. 23, group 1)

The private media thinks of themselves as political actors whose aim it is to overthrow the government and/or get power to them. They have power since they have equipment, know-how, and the ability to broadcast.

“The media think they are political actors and until now no one was controlling them”.¹⁰²

(Interview no. 17, group 1)

⁹⁹ “Y en el caso de Venezuela han promovido el golpe de estado, una serie de valores totalmente falsos y antihumanos, discriminación por ser homosexual, por la gestión de género, por color de la piel, por persona. Ellos están promoviendo los valores más perversos y que no tienen que ver con los principios de la humanidad y que no tienen nada que ver con el socialismo. Y por otro lado hay un socialismo del siglo 21 que promueve el bienestar de los humanos que es la democracia verdadera.”

¹⁰⁰ This may be compared to Freedman's (2014, 19-22; 2015; see also chapter 3.1) chaos paradigm

¹⁰¹ “Los medios del estado, digamos, son y conforman un bloque que ciertamente responde a los intereses gubernamentales e institucionales y en gran medida están adosados por una línea ministerial o una línea editorial, lógicamente del gobierno, esta está construida con el principio de una estructura (de poder).”

¹⁰² “Los medios piensan que son actores políticos y hasta ahora nadie estaba controlándolos.”

However, this issue is not dealt with as a main problem to be solved. Like one of the interviewees said: "...this is a democratic country. If you land a punch you need to receive one too."¹⁰³ (Interview no. 19, group 1). Meaning, that if you insult or attack the other side you need to be prepared to receive an attack, too. Within this category there already is an answer to the problem of the "media war" and it is the third way: Citizens communicating, informing, and making the news they want to read or watch.

Thus, the main focus is on the people and how they have started to activate in their communities since they are tired of the "media war" and want to have proper and correct information. The scene of the group varies, but they all saw the confrontation already starting a long time ago in the past. The agents in this group are common Venezuelans and the "big" media, including the private and State media, who are not interested in them but in their economic and political interests. Moreover, maybe that is the reason why they are seen as one and the same, two sides of the same coin. Thus, there is little difference in their view to people. Even though the "big" media are seen as having their own war, at least the government side is doing something better since it is "giving more opportunities to the people" (Interview no. 19). The private media are denying the people and their issues.

"The private media are trying to make, in a sloppy way, this process of invisibilization of the people".¹⁰⁴

(Interview no. 10, group 1)

They are using media for propagandistic purposes and even invent some stories or parts of stories. They do not inform the people about the issues that matter to them.

Interestingly, the citizens' media - the third way - and their role are not the traditional one informing the citizens about their community's issues. Instead, since the mainstream media is not able to give the news the people need, the citizens tell the news about the bigger issues, including national and global. Even with a smaller budget.

"Because we are not a daily paper, we have this common newspaper when we have things to say, also about Lybia or Paletinia. These are situations when the people need to know a little bit more that there is on the pages of private media. So we make a special edition and

¹⁰³ "Porque es un país democrático, si tu das un golpe a una persona tienes que recibirlo de vuelta también."

¹⁰⁴ "Los medios privados intentan hacer con muchas torpezas ese proceso de invisibilización del pueblo."

develop the theme so the people would have a little more vision about what is happening.”¹⁰⁵

(Interview no. 22, group 1)

Therefore, in this category, the people are already taking the power and challenging professional journalists. There is still a lot to do but they just cannot stay still and do nothing. They need the information and they are ready to produce it. Obviously, the government is helping them a bit with setting laws but, it seems, that it's not as much as others think, at least not economically. Considering the background of some of the interviews the critique some of them pose to the government and State media is interesting. They may receive government aid, be employed by the government, or co-operate with it in different projects, but still do not agree with the goals.

On the first level of the conflict the state is seen as a powerful, active and ethical actor that has its foundation in its citizens. The state includes the government and government institutions (especially CONATEL). The principle thriving value of the government is the right to live a good life (see appendix 8) (compare with the frame “Shepherded people” in case study 1 where it is suggested that the people need guidance so they could achieve a “good life”). Yet, it also has some conflicting interests since it has some power ambitions. The private media seem to have negative values of gaining profit and power. They do not share the values the rest of society has. Private media is not seen as an independent actor since wealthy elite are acting in the background and pulling their strings. State media (especially VTV) are not seen as an independent actor but an extension of the State. This is also why they have some conflicting interests. They are serving the community and the revolution, but they should also function more independently and exercise freedom of expression and tell objective truth. Civil society is seen as an active unified group that is acting within their own community. Their values are described as “non-political.” They value freedom of speech and opinion and a right to be heard.

The view of group 2 is similar to group 1. However, they emphasize certain things more. For example, private media is facing an unresolvable problem because different values and class differences with the rest of society prevent finding a common solution. The state media's role is seen more as a defender of the state and it should not do independent news reporting. The state media's problem is they are in the crossfire of the old and new journalistic model; the criteria of good journalism has changed. The people are a marginal but intelligent group and their values and interests include (direct) participation, freedom of information, and plurality of information.

¹⁰⁵ “Porque nosotros como no somos diarios tenemos ese periódico común cuando tenemos cosas que decir, también de Libia, de Palestina. Son situaciones que necesita la gente saber, así pueden ir un poco más allá de lo que hay en las páginas de los medios privados. Entonces tomamos una edición especial y desarrollamos el tema para que la gente tenga un poco más allá la visión (que está pasando).”

On the second level, the state helps the people to integrate into society and takes care of normatives. Yet, sometimes the government crosses the boundaries and dominates. Therefore, it is still seen as a work in progress. The private media is seen as active since they are attacking the government and the state media. Private media seeks to manipulate public opinion by manipulating information and telling pure lies and that is seen as practicing unethical journalistic techniques. Because of their conflicting interests the State media is only telling narrow or half-truths. They concentrate more on the revolution and defending it and are living in a symbiosis with the government. Civil society is active within its own group by forming different kinds of activist groups and community media. However, the state is an important facilitator in this.

In group 2, it is emphasized that the private media still has the hegemony, which the state is trying to break. That is why the state and civil society need to force private media by any means to follow a common societal model. An example of this is enforcing a 33 percent model¹⁰⁶. Nevertheless, civil society alone is passive towards private media. The state is cooperating with the people and sets the basic rules of a society, but it also abuses its power. Maybe this is the reason why the people are actively participating mainly *outside* of official society (esp. in community and alternative media).

On the third level, as a consequence, the state needs to defend itself from the attacks of the opposition and the private media. Civil society is struggling a bit since the state does not always hear them and are also acting passive towards the private media. The state media does not have independent journalism, and the editorial line of the media does not satisfy the people. Interestingly, it is also stated they do not even follow Chávez's statements, which implies the "people" – i.e. normal citizens – consider themselves knowing what Chávez really wants and having a more direct connection with him. This was also implied in the frame "Supreme leader" in case study 2 (chapter 5.1.2), which points to Ellner's (2008, 139-194; see chapter 2.1) remark that on the grassroots level the people saw themselves as selfless and dedicated to the cause as opposed to the corrupted party-level, and that is why the grassroots level's proposals were directed straight to the state level. Thus, civil society gets their voice heard better than before even though the mainstream media is still dominant and are using civil society for their own purposes.

Group 2 shares many of the opinions of the first group but they see some progress. One significant step that is mentioned is that the law forces the media to have users' committees.

All in all the state has the justification to act above others since it has good values (incl. good life for its citizens) but at the same time there are some contradictions since the basis of the state should be in its citizens and currently the state does not listen to them. Therefore, it is a work in progress

¹⁰⁶ 33 percent model implies a model where the State, private sector, and community media each have a 1/3 share of Venezuela's media ownership.

and the interviewees are hoping the situation will get better. The state is able to act in a dominant role since it has the legislative, executive and, to some extent, judiciary power. Yet, at the same time, there is another dominant power bloc: the wealthy elite (the opposition). Since the elite's (negative and selfish) values and lifestyle are threatened, it is acting against the government/state. The state media and, mostly also the private media, are seen as extensions of these two power blocs. Since civil society does not possess equal powers in this equation it has started to act within its own community and has started to look for alternative ways to function and gain information. Since the state shares some of the values with civil society, it is helping civil society get organized and enables it by laws, passing on know-how, and, to some extent, economical aid.

The media

For this category, the media has become one of the political actors that have their own political agenda. This is something that was brought out in other categories too, but these interviews were selected in this category because in them it was stated as a main cause to explain what is happening in Venezuela instead of a background assumption.

*"What the media have done until now is easy to mix up with a concept of political parties... In many cases they are not only the media but also mobilizers."*¹⁰⁷

(Interview no. 12)

This group consists of university teachers, media management level workers, State media, and citizen activists. They come from the government and opposition side. None of them currently work as practicing journalists. Some of them also have a political position.

In this category there are both Chávez's and the opposition supporters. That is also the reason why democracy in an ideal situation represents many different things; the most commonly mentioned being right to choose, participation, and human rights, thus including both liberal and participative forms of democratic theory (cf. Canache 2012). The interviewees agree that in real life there has been a change from representative democracy to participative democracy. The media's role in an ideal democracy is to inform the people and, in this way, enable exercising their role as citizens better. In real life, the media has converted into political actors or are even acting like political parties. They possess a lot of power.

The view to the background varies. Common to all of them is they say that what is happening is nothing new: either it has happened already in the past

¹⁰⁷ "Lo que los medios han sido hasta ahora se confunde mucho con el concepto de partidos políticos... En muchos casos no solamente son medios sino movilizadores."

or it is happening in other countries. The actors are the two sides of the conflict: the State media and private media. Individual journalists are seen as “actors in their theatre.” As a consequence, all the news does not seem to reflect reality; like one of the interviewees said, that in the media, the audience can see “the official country” and the “reality” (Interview no. 24) depending on if it is a State or private medium. However, the ideal to seek objective information is questioned as well. The media should not necessarily even try to aim at a neutral stance. Political parallelism seems to be acceptable but instrumentalization not (see chapter 3.1.4):

“I believe that objectivity does not exist. Now they are mediums with a fraud because they do not say directly that they favour the ideas. They should say it.”¹⁰⁸

(Interview no. 12)

Behind everything is that everyone seeks his or her own interests. Chávez wants power and his party wants to deepen the revolution. The private media has their own economical interests. The common people want information but they are left alone. In this category the people have not taken action like in category 1.

“Soon the people will open their eyes and realise that neither of the two is good. With polarization comes the extremes and the extremes are bad.”¹⁰⁹

(Interview no. 34)

On the value level the state is seen as a strong and weak actor at the same time. It is lacking social power so it is trying to force its power by dominating, not by hegemony. The state has its own strong values, which include power itself, ruling and maintaining order. Private media is seen as a fragmented field that may have positive or negative values. Some may have good journalistic values but some have economic or political values that are perceived as negative. Capitalism that is influencing in the background according to some is seen as something negative. The state media are the government’s and the state’s non-independent extension. They do not possess nor even think about their own values. The people are seen as a bit of a marginal group in a Venezuelan society. They do not have their own voice. Their values include right to participate, freedom of opinion, truthful information that is based on reality, and other soft or humane values.

¹⁰⁸ “Creo que la objetividad no existe. Ahora son medios con fraude porque no dicen directamente que están en favor de sus ideas. Tendrían que decirlo.”

¹⁰⁹ “Pronto la gente va a abrir sus ojos y darse cuenta que con ninguno de estos dos (oposición y oficialismo), (se logrará un equilibrio), con la polarización se lleva al extremo y los extremos son malos.”

On the second level, the state is trying to force its power mainly by using law, but because it is weak other actors (including the president) are also able to steer it. Private media are active and they are attacking the government. They attack, for example, by spreading lies. Because the state media is not independent they are just trying to transmit the messages of the government and respond to the attacks of the private media, which implies political parallelism (cf. Mancini 2012). The people have limited or no possibilities to participate in the mainstream media. They are mainly used as a political tool.

On the third level, since the state media is just responding to the attacks of the private media, the situation polarizes even more. Since the private media does not answer for the state but to the citizens and audiences, they are able to function fairly freely. As a result, the state forces its power even more by using *cadenas* or fear, which was also visible in frame analysis, and the vicious circle is ready. In this category it is evident there is no state hegemony but an intention to dominate. The economic elite or the opposition do not have (media) hegemony either because the media sector consists of several different actors. Some powerful ones have strong political interests. As a result, the society does not function well since there is no balanced information. The people are not satisfied with the situation, but since they do not have power in society they cannot do much.

The position of the state is a bit problematic since its power should be based on the citizens, but because it is weak in this sense other actors are able to influence it. Yet, the one who is able to steer the state is able to use the force of law; also, later on, this has generated other “weapons” like fear, economic and rhetorical tools. The state is active and it is concentrated on acting towards the private media (and the opposition). The private media is active as well and they are directing their attacks towards the state/government by using rhetoric. The private media is able to function this way since their existence and power is based on the audiences, i.e. the citizens.

State

For this category, one actor in a society is dominating in the power play of a society and is using the media to spread its hegemony. The interviewees, who are media scholars, politicians, NGO and management level media workers, that all openly criticize government in their work, agree that what is actually happening in Venezuela is polarization of the society and this political polarization is stretched to the media as well. The main cause of the polarization is Chávez and his way of attacking the private media and using the government media for his own purposes.

Democracy as an ideal situation is all about freedoms and civil rights in this category, i.e. defined by liberal democratic terms. Also, many other things are mentioned. Thus, in Chávez's Venezuela, the quality of democracy has deteriorated. The role of media in an ideal democracy is to reflect the society and provide plural information to and for the citizens. In Chávez's Ven-

ezeuela this ideal has converted into reflecting their owners, i.e. the state and private corporations.

In the background there are the same problems there always have been in the history of Venezuela. Now they have only escalated. The media and politics have always had close relations.

“They were really close. Many important media in the country supported the candidacy of the president (Chávez). There were cases of biased persons among the owners of the media that formed a part of his ministerial cabinet.”¹¹⁰

(Interview no. 14)

During the era of Chávez the relations of the media and Chávez changed because of the events of 2002 and Chávez stating he is aiming for socialism. Therefore, the actors in this category are Chávez and his government against private media. Chávez is trying to make his message heard in all possible ways.

“They (the government) adopted all the imaginable systems to seduce, impose self-censorship, to send fascist people to break media outlets. This is pure Peronism. And even though the government is a disaster from the point of view of communication, there will come a day when we spend all the day on radio and television and the only thing we can hear is the voice of Chávez.”¹¹¹

(Interview no. 16)

Self-censorship is commonly stated but also the word threatening is used. Access to information is another problem since Chávez is willing to use just his own media, and press conferences are not as common as before and, if there is one, private media journalists are ridiculed there. The main reason why Chávez is doing all this is that he is trying to change the old commercial media hegemony with the new one. He is very sensitive towards critique and that is why he wants the state media to dominate, and also because he does not believe in private property but wants government control.

¹¹⁰ “Eran muy cercanos, muchos medios importantes en el país apoyaban la candidatura del presidente. Hubo casos de personas vinculadas, propietarios de los medios que formaron parte de su gabinete ministerial.”

¹¹¹ “Ellos (el gobierno) adoptan todos los sistemas imaginables para seducir, imponer autocensurar y hasta enviarle a la gente de oposición fascistas a romper las emisoras. Esto es peronismo puro. Y pese a que el gobierno es un desastre desde el punto de vista comunicacional, llegará un día en que recorreremos todo el día (de radio y televisión) y solo oiremos la voz de Chávez.”

“Chávez revealed once that he wants hegemony for himself so he tries to subvert the system by changing one hegemony to another, even so that hegemony is Chavismo's official doctrine.”¹¹²

(Interview no. 26)

The private media just wants to survive because there has already been many media outlets closed down.

This category is related to category 2. The difference between them is that in this one the interviewees see that even though the media has had, and maybe still has, a political role, the main agenda of Chávez is to spread his message. It is his and his government's mission, and the state media is simply his tool in attaining the hegemony. Private media has converted from being a principal actor with their close political connections to an actor that is simply trying to survive the attacks. Thus, in category 2 the state is seen as weak since it does not have real power, but other actors are trying use the State for their own interests. Instead, some mediums are seen as powerful political actors. In category 3, the state is not separated from other actors but Chávez and his government *are* the state, and the media sector is seen as weak.

On the first level, the state, the government, and Chávez are closely connected together. The state is one of the principal actors in a society, but in Venezuela it is trying to be *the* most important. The values of the state include power that is gained by public opinion and domination. The values of the private media include good journalism and cost-efficiency. The state media is a non-independent actor, which is led by the State/government. They lack journalistic principles. The people are considered part of a society that should be better recognized. Their values include participation and a right to be heard.

On the second level, the state is attacking the private media because the State is afraid they are able to repeat the events of 2002¹¹³. The private media are defending themselves from the attacks of the state and the state media. The state media transmit government propaganda and attack the private media. There is a lot of potential in the community media and social media in giving voice to the people. The Internet and technology play an important and growing role.

On the third level, as a consequence, the citizens and the private media suffer because of the state's actions. The private media is seen as a fragmented field because different media outlets have chosen different kinds of survival strategies due to the government's attacks. Despite it all, the private media is still making better journalism in general than the opposing side. The media reflects the conflicting situation of the country. There is also a conflict

¹¹² “Chávez revela de una vez que el quiere la hegemonía para el, entonces intenta subvertir el sistema cambiando; una hegemonía por otra. Incluso la hegemonía es doctrina oficial del Chavismo.”

¹¹³ 48-hour coup and oil strike

of interest since the state is seeking a communicational hegemony but society as a whole still needs private media. The private media possess know-how and political and economic power. Citizens still do not have hardly any power. Their power is restricted only to mundane things. That is why they turn to private media.

The state is able to function as a dominant power because it has the force of the law and it is also able to use economic sanctions and fear. Yet, it does not have the social power provided by the public, which seems to be more on the private media's side. For this, the true nature of the government hegemony may be questioned. However, it is noted that the private media field is fragmented so there are all kinds of actors: the ones that follow ethics and journalistic principals and, unfortunately, those that do not have such a good guideline. As a consequence, the citizens suffer because their values and interests are not fulfilled. The main weapons in the media war are rhetoric and, on the government side, law and intimidation, which may be a sign of their own fear according to the interviewees.

Journalists

In this category, the interviewees think there is a system of domination in Venezuela. As a consequence, journalists are trying to survive the best they can but, according to some, they should try even harder. The category includes opposition and state media journalists, academics, and management level personnel, i.e. they all are either opposition media journalists or have a long career. Democracy for them equals free elections, separation of powers, freedom and civil rights. Yet, under Chávez's rule the quality of democracy has deteriorated and the society is polarized into two camps. The media should transmit truthful and balanced information to the citizens. However, the media are not able to fulfill their task because of the economic situation, lack of freedom of expression, and political bias.

*"The private media have taken the role of not informing but to have a constant campaign against the government. The public media react to this campaign against the government and cover some government's deficiencies."*¹¹⁴

(Interview no. 29)

The fractured democracy is shown, for example, in the restricted information flow and concentration of power. The view of the past varies a bit among the interviewees. Some interviewees say that before the mainstream media and the government were living peacefully together; some think they

¹¹⁴ "Los medios privados se han encargado de no informar sino de tener una campaña constante en contra del gobierno. Los medios públicos reaccionan ante esa campaña contra el gobierno y tapan algunas de las deficiencias que tiene el gobierno."

just tolerated each other. Especially the events of 2002 changed the role of media and they took a more political stance.

*"The media had a really good relationship with the power. And what did they do? Maybe there were high level agreements like 'do not publish this...'. There was a certain type of censorship in some particular cases between the so-called people with power that could close doors for certain persons, but it was totally different (than now). But the relationship with power, I feel it was more honest because at the end of the day everyone had their role; the state was the state, the media were the media, but they all were not satanized."*¹¹⁵

(Interview no. 28)

The actors involved in the situation are Chávez and his media against the other side, i.e. private media or opposition media. To the question as to how these agents act, the interviewees look for the answer from the journalists' perspectives not as the organizational agents. The interviewees all agree there is plenty of self-censorship, aggressions, manipulation, and incorrect information. The reasons behind this are seen differently, though. Some interviewees say the journalists are just trying to survive and they do their jobs the best they can. It is difficult to get information from the government side since government offices do not want to talk to the media. The journalists are scared and threatened. This is true, say other interviewees, but they rely on a strong professional identity and think it is the journalists' job to try even harder and not get lazy. It has always been difficult to get information from certain quarters such as the military or Catholic Church, but that is where professionalism comes into the picture and a dedicated journalist should use his/her contacts to find a way.

The reason behind this is that Chávez wants power and the state media wants their hegemony of information. Individual journalists just simply want to do their job. They want to survive or they have just lost their interest. The media is afraid to lose freedom of expression and many government workers are afraid (to lose their jobs).

The interviewees who emphasized the efforts of the journalists doing their best and trying to survive were from the media traditionally thought to represent opposition media (print and television). The two persons who thought that the journalists should try to do even more both had long careers. The other one had been working from the 70s but was not working as a practising

¹¹⁵ "Los medios tenían una muy buena relación con el poder. Y eso qué hacía? Que quizá habían acuerdos arriba de "mira no me saques esto...", sí existió un cierto tipo de censura en algunos casos particulares como por ejemplo; llamadas entre de gente de poder que podían cerrarle las puertas a una persona, pero era totalmente distinto... pero la relación con el poder, yo siento que era más honesta porque al final cada quien tenía su papel, el Estado era el Estado, los medios eran los medios, todo no estaba satanizado."

journalist anymore, and the other one had almost 20 years as a journalist in different media outlets and currently is working in a medium sympathetic to the government.

On the first level, the state is an unethical actor that should set the rules of a society, but in Venezuela it wants to gain power by using force. Its interests include power and domination. The state media is a non-independent actor that is trying to support the government, but still, according to some, they are trying to fulfill their journalistic purposes. Therefore, also their values are two-fold: they work as an extension of the government but they are still, especially by individual journalists, trying to make good journalism. The private media consists of different actors and they are a varied field. Yet, in general, their guideline is good journalistic values. The citizens are an active group who have been suffering but are finally offered a chance to participate by using technology. Their values include the right to be heard and have participation in society and the media.

On the second level, the state rules by abusing laws and pressuring the media. As a result of the state's actions, the media politicize since they are trying to fulfill the government's expectations and this affects the editorial lines of the media as well. Private media are defending themselves from the state and state media actions. Technology pushes the progress forward and this also offers journalists a chance to work as mediators between different actors of a society.

On the third level, as a consequence, the people and the media end up suffering since access to information is restricted and journalism converts into something one-dimensional even though individual journalists are trying to do their job as best they can. No one is listening to anyone. People depend on the private media since they are the only trustworthy traditional information source. The society as a whole suffers because of the situation. Little by little people get their voices heard more and more, but the dominant mainstream media will not do it on their own and on their own will, and that is why the people need to be active.

The state is a dominant actor because it has the rule of law. As a result, the rest of society suffers. In addition to the law rhetoric is also used as a weapon. Yet, new technology is undermining the power of the state and, to some extent, the power of the private media, too. It offers power to the citizens in the form of information leakages, like Freedman (2014) suggested.

6.1.2 THE DIFFICULT TASK OF ATTAINING HEGEMONY

This chapter examines the basis of different societal actors and their interaction and power relations. The macro level polarized situation of the country has no doubt affected the meso and micro levels as well. The question is how. According to Samet (2013, 529), on both sides of the conflict the persons "see themselves as victims who mobilize the force of popular sovereignty against the abuses of power." This is easy to believe since who would want to per-

ceive oneself as a villain or abuser? The people tend to think their actions are justified and logical.

There is a power struggle between the parties. Both sides of the conflict are trying to get a hold of or maintain hegemony if hegemony is understood in Gramscian terms, including political, ideological, and economic spheres. However, the identity of the parties of the conflict should be identified first in order to know what we are actually speaking of. Different categories define the main actors and their forms of power differently. State media may in all the cases be called *state* media since all the interviewees connect them closely to the state. The position of the state varies, though, since for some it is a strong apparatus, including several different institutions and, for some, it may appear strong but in fact is weak since different actors (including the president) may steer it. Also, private media's independence is questioned in some categories where they are seen as an extension of the economic elite. Civil society is a clearer actor but its position in the triangle moves on the line between being the base of the state or the base of the private media. However, what is interesting is the civil society's ability to adjust to the situation in categories 1 and 4 where they are no longer passive bystanders but have started to look for other forms of empowerment.

Individual journalists are seen usually working within, and for, their institutions. In category 1, they are closest to the authoritarian mode (Nieminen 2000; see chapter 3.1) when it comes to the state media, and to commercial mode when it comes to the private media. Most of the interviewees in the categories 2 and 3 are describing the paternal mode. Thus, individual journalists are still part of the power structures even though they are trying to deliver the information to the citizens. Exceptions to this are some of the interviewees in category 2 that do not believe in objective information. Categories 1 and 4 both are describing democratic mode when they talk about the development of and how the system will change in the future. Category 1 sees the role of journalists closest to the participatory type. Everyone can be a journalist, and their role is basically to serve the community from this perspective almost like in the postmodern mode but still having some power since information is power. In category 4, individual journalists with strong professional identities have approached civil society and serve it by initiating public debate and directing the messages to the powerholders' level like in the representative type. (Nieminen 2000.)

The hegemony cannot be reached without all the different sectors. The people and the media are important parts of obtaining it since the base of hegemony is voluntary and absorbed. All the interviewees agree that the state has some power interests. It wants more power for the sake of ruling even though it should have a genuine interest of serving the society. Yet, some believe that the connection between the state and the people is more genuine, and some that it is less authentic, which may be compared to Poulantzas's (1980) remark that the state may unite with a certain class in order gain hegemony, i.e. the state is using the people to gain its interests according to

some interviewees. However, some seem to think that the state has no bad intentions (except the contradicting value of gaining more power). Also, some see the same happening on the other side of the conflict as well. The market, i.e. private companies, may be using the people as a tool to gain their interests. However, this is not cooperation since no one is pursuing unity.

This contradicting situation can be approached from the point of view of hegemony using Haug's idea of creating values from below and Mouffe's idea about the formation of moral values that represent the hegemony that should not be questioned since they are the norm. What is seen as immoral expressions do not even need explanation nor be understood; they are simply seen as evil (Mouffe 2005a, 76). This describes the situation in Venezuela well. In category 1, the opposition is labelled with negative economic values of gaining more money and profit, and in categories 3 and 4 the state is strongly labelled with a negative value of gaining more power. This creates a situation where dialogue is impossible since the opposing side is seen as an enemy and immoral values are seen as a self-evident part of the actor. Also, like Mouffe (2005b) pointed out about the left's reaction to the extreme right movements in Europe, the same can be applied to the situation of Venezuela by condemning and demonizing the other while at the same time securing their own goodness. The two opposing sides may be accusing each other of immoral actions and possessing negative values and interests, but this also serves as securing their own image as good and moral. Thus, since the situation has entered antagonism, accusing of immoral values have a purpose. This is also affecting underneath it all the macro level (cf. Haug 1987). That is why the conflict is perceived on the value level that justifies and explains the events on the action level. Different parties of the conflict have become, instead of adversaries, enemies, and that is why they can be labeled with certain non-negotiable moral values.

In this, it helps the idea of signifiers. For example, the opposition is not only the opposition but it carries the burden of the old regime of 40 years before Chávez, which represents neoliberal changes and therefore economic (and selfish/individualistic) values. Or the private media are not just mediums, but they are connected to the market economy, the forces of the opposition, and the neoliberal changes before the era of Chávez. Or the state is not just a state, but it includes Chávez's persona and Chávez's supporters' ambitions of power. This is explored more in detail in chapter 6.2 where the formation of collective memory is studied.

Signifier also explains why people may sometimes desire something that seems to be against their own interests or things that seem to be contradicting. The signifier represents to them something more than it seems: their desire for something or similar values or (in)justice.

There are different forms of power (chapter 3.1). In the case of Venezuela, each of these powers are connected to certain values/interests. The state can be a signifier representing a political and forcing power, the opposition economic power, and the people may or may not have social power but at least

the two big opponents are competing to gain social power through the media in order to affect the minds of citizens. Therefore, the media may be seen to possess a power that is publicity (cf. Kunelius & al. 2010). Thus, the media becomes a central arena and participant in the conflict. In the “real” world, the web of powers may be more complicated.

Another point raised in the interviews is the role of the state and the lack of separation of powers. The state seems to seek power even according to the persons who think it is aiming to provide a good life for its citizens. According to some, the state wants hegemony. The question is, how close is the state to achieving the hegemony or will it remain as pure domination? The state's role as a dominator is interesting because it may be seen as strong and weak at the same time; it is strong in the sense that it is able to dominate, but weak in the sense that it has the need to dominate. Thus, there is a clear distinction between domination and hegemony. Hegemony is something that is absorbed; domination is something that is forced. This may also be seen in the theme of fear that keeps popping up. Intimidation and other forms of creating fear are not necessary in hegemony. However, the question of if the state is actually creating the fear or if it's someone else's discourse that has penetrated society cannot be answered based on the data. Yet, the statistics of several freedom of expression organizations mentioned in the introductory chapter speak for the justified feeling of fear¹¹⁶. Moreover, what cannot be denied is the experienced fear of citizens voting (case study 3) or of journalists, since it should be remembered that fear is a feeling not an act.

6.2 Different conceptions of the past

Since collective memories are something that influence the values, beliefs and norms (e.g. Liu & Hilton 2005), and it should be taken into account when trying to understand group's social identity (Conдор 1996; Jetten & Hutchison 2011; Smeekes et al. 2011), it is essential to focus on the collective memories of the interviewees as well in order to explain the different worldviews detected in the previous chapter 6.1. By focusing on the collective memory it is possible to say something about where the values and norms come from and thus we can examine the construction of different signifiers more thoroughly.

There are different forms of collective memory such as forgetting, renaming events, collapsing commemoration, the mosaic-like aspect of collective memory, and the role of media in memory shaping (Zelizer 1995). Forgetting implies that people tend to forget and remember some parts of a memory. This is also related to the aspect of mosaic-like memory, which refers to the people's tendency to connect certain parts of the memory together. Renam-

¹¹⁶ The government has accused many NGOs of taking sides in the conflict and serving the neoliberal hegemony.

ing events or retrospective nominalization, as Zelizer calls it, refers to naming events in a certain way, which also has its function in memory shaping. When commemorative dates are put together in order to remember more than one event it is called collapsing commemoration (Zelizer 1995, 222-223). For the purposes of this research, however, a thorough analysis of collective memory was not needed as the aim was to explain some factors behind the values. Thus, a rough version of collective memory analysis was performed. All of the above-mentioned aspects of collective memory were looked for in the interviews but mosaic (or framing/past explaining the future) proved to be the most useful category. Next, the findings are presented.

6.2.1 COLLECTIVE MEMORY OF THE ERA BEFORE CHÁVEZ

When analyzing the interview data, the history was divided into the eras before (-1998), and during (1999-), Chávez's presidency in order to look for aspects that separated the two time eras and in this way give possible explanations of the differences. When analyzing the era before Chávez there were five explaining aspects found. They were, 1) national identity, 2) power, 3) socio-economical aspects, 4) democracy and politics, and 5) nothing has really changed.

National identity was not a dominant angle but it is important to mention since it tells something about Venezuelan culture. Venezuelans were told to be a united nation before Chávez's era or, better said, they felt united even though the people were varied and this also was reflected in journalism. There was also a feeling of not appreciating oneself, which comes from the colonial past and, later, from stereotypical images of latinos in the media that made people believe they are like that.

*"Venezuela is a country that has a problem with identity and this has been the case already for a long time. This comes from the colonial era. That they do not like themselves. That they do not want to know their country. That they see everything that what is happening abroad as something better."*¹¹⁷

(Interview no. 34)

The few persons having this point of view come mainly from category 2.

Another totally different kind of theme mentioned here was represented by a few interviewees, mainly from group 2 in category 1, but also some other interviewees mentioned the issue, which were mostly the decadent values that prevailed in the Fourth Republic. This was reflected in society in general but also in personal experiences like one interviewee states:

¹¹⁷ "Venezuela es un país que tiene un problema con su identidad y esto pasa ya desde hace muchos años. Eso viene desde la época de la Colonia. Los venezolanos no se quieren a sí mismos, no quieren conocer a su país y todo lo que ven afuera lo ven como mejor."

*"(12 years ago) one was looking for a way to survive in this strong communicational situation. There were no possibilities. There was no (moral code). If you had an idea, they plagiarized it and the next day they had the same kind of show on TV that you had. If you did not have the strength, the muscle, to be able to do it and the contacts, well, they did it and it was a universal phenomenon."*¹¹⁸

(Interview no. 3)

On the institutional level, this was shown in the media that aired telenovelas that represented "false values," and past governments did not care about values so they were not interested in developing citizens' intellectual skills.

These two different kinds of points of view tell their story about a society that was experienced in two different ways. On the one hand, it was seen as peaceful but with low self-esteem. On the other hand, as having low moral and, maybe, a bit of capitalistic values of everyone being responsible only for oneself.

Power. In this section there are different aspects of power included. Different points of views mentioned were, a) clientelism vs. corruption, b) private media having power, c) the media supporting the ones in power, and d) the media and the journalists not having power.

In the first aspect of clientelism vs. corruption there is a divide between the opposition-minded and government-minded. Mainly journalists from category 4 talk about the clientelistic relationship between the media and the power holders.

Government-minded from categories 1 and 2 talk about corruption. Corruption had penetrated all over the system and not only in the media and politics. For example, it was said that Venezuela created a mechanism of poverty as it was following the instructions of the International Monetary Fund, which increased corruption (Interview no. 9).

Private media were seen as one of the power holders in many of the interviews (8 interviewees) from categories 1-3 without distinctions between government and the opposition-minded. The media were using and abusing the power they possessed.

*"This commercial sector hegemonized frequencies, appointed ministers, had majority in the congress. They always managed to appoint their friends to the congress and always to control the commission of the media in the congress and the lower house."*¹¹⁹

(Interview no. 16)

¹¹⁸ "(Hace 12 años) uno buscaba para sobrevivir en esta situación comunicacional fuerte. Tu no tenías posibilidades. No tenías un guión sino una idea, la idea era plagiada y mañana ellos (los medios) tenían un programa en la televisión como el tuyo. Si tu no tenías fuerza, el músculo para poder hacerlo y los contactos, bueno ellos lo hacían (plageaban ideas) y eso era un fenómeno mundial."

¹¹⁹ "Este sector comercial hegemoniza frecuencias, nombra ministros, tiene mayoría en el congreso. Siempre logran nombrar congresistas amigos de ellos y siempre controlan la comisión de medios del congreso y de la cámara baja."

The distinction between the opposition and government-minded can be found in the way they talk about this abuse of power. The government-minded emphasized more the fact that the private media were interested only in good ratings and that is why they showed things that represented immoral values by using stereotypes, manipulating information, etc. Yet the people were totally unaware of all this. Not always was the media the powerful one because sometimes they were seen just to support the ones in power. In categories 2-4 it was stated the politicians used the media and that individual journalists did not have power.

Socio-economical aspects. Here are included such things as economical instability, neoliberalism, and class society.

Many societal problems were mentioned such as illiteracy, extreme poverty, and economic polarization. For example, it was said there were some elites that got richer and richer while the majority of the population lived in poverty and had no access to education, healthcare, nor did not have part in public politics. The interviewees come from different categories (1, 2 & 4), but the majority of them can be considered as government-minded. Class society, which is related to the societal problems and polarization, is explicitly brought out by a few interviewees.

Oil revenue is one of the most important explaining factors in the history of Venezuela. It has affected not only the economy, but also the politics of the country. Especially, the economic problems that started in the 1980s were related to the oil after the high expectations of the 1970s. This aspect was brought out in different categories by both the opposition and government-minded.

Neoliberalism was one of the most important explaining factors among the government- or leftist-minded persons. Caracazo has become a sad monument of neoliberal politics.

*“Carlos Andres Pérez applied neoliberalist package. Advised by the IMF. A package that affected indirectly to the interests of the people. And this was, like, the last thing since the people were already impoverished. The people decided to go out to the streets to protest and this is what is known as Caracazo, a popular uprising from all the points of view...”*¹²⁰

(Interview no. 10)

Democracy and politics. Two most important themes under this section are quality of democracy and the media problems. Also, some isolated comments about lack of human rights are mentioned.

¹²⁰ “Carlos Andres Pérez tomó la presidencia aplicando el paquete neoliberal. Impuesto con el IMF. Un paquete que afectó indirectamente a los intereses del pueblo. Y esto fue como la tocada final porque ya estaba empobrecido, etc. El pueblo decidió salir a la calle a protestar y eso que se conoce como El Caracazo, una rebelión popular en todos los puntos de vista...”

No one seems to be satisfied with the quality of the democracy of the Fourth Republic. However, there are differences in the way the quality was experienced. The opposition-minded say there was a formal democracy since there were elections every five years, referring a bit to O'Donnell's (1994) type of delegative democracy (see chapter 3.2), with AD and COPEI taking turns in power. But some say that even though this system was far from perfect it was slowly changing on its own.

Government-minded, on the other hand, emphasize the feeling of exclusion among the citizens. Citizens were politically unaware about societal issues and, frankly, they did not even care. They were interested in their personal daily lives. At the same time, the power holders did not care much about the citizens either so there was a gap between the two groups even though there were elections every five years and they had, or should have had, some kind of connection.

*"12 years ago no one cared about politics, nor about others. They cared only about oneself and their tiny space. The people in power said something and the people accepted that it was this way."*¹²¹

(Interview no. 3)

One of the groups that was excluded in the democracy was the communists. As told in chapter 2.1, they were left out from the Pact of Punto Fijo. It was a bit surprising this was not mentioned more often in the data. It can be explained by the fact that communism was almost completely invisible to the general society during the years of Fourth Republic.

*"Venezuelan people that backed up the Left did not exist. This part of Venezuela was invisible."*¹²²

(Interview no. 9)

Only a couple of persons brought it up, and one of them had personal experiences that must have affected his/her later life a lot since the person's family member, an activist of a communist party, died in unknown circumstances.

Mediawise, many persons have either heard or have experienced conflicts between previous governments and media outlets. Several persons (8 interviewees) talk about government sanctions or control during the Fourth Republic. They come from all the categories and represent all sides of the con-

¹²¹ "Hace 12 años a nadie le importaba la política, no importaban los otros, importaba solo uno mismo y su pequeño espacio. La gente que estaba en el poder decían una cosa y la gente aceptaba que era así."

¹²² "El pueblo de Venezuela que respaldaba la Izquierda no existía. Esta parte de Venezuela era invisibilizada."

flict. The media were controlled by the governments in many different ways even though the actual legislation was not forced.

“In fact, to an oil producer country, the technology came really fast. To know how to use it is another thing. What happens when a dictatorship brings television to Venezuela? It considers it as something else than just progress like cars of ultimate model. The television came here BUT without regulation.”¹²³

(Interview no. 2)

The previous governments tried to economically affect media outlets; for example, by directing government advertising to certain media, sanctioning media by fees or controlling their access to dollars or paper or ink. However, the difference to the era of Chávez may be found in the attitude towards the media since “there were sanctions but no irritation towards the media” (Interview no. 13). Despite that, some individual journalists were threatened. The governments even directly applied censorship, which is stated by several interviewees.

“So I have worked in a newspaper that had a really strict line against the government of Carlos Andres Pérez and Carlos Andres Pérez attacked this newspaper. The newspaper had a really distinct editorial line. This newspaper was censored during a constitutional guarantee suspension there was after the coup of February 4th (1992). There were censors, and the Ministry of Interior that applied the censorship. Issues came out with blank spaces. So, for me, it is nothing new that my profession has been in the center of critique and tension.”¹²⁴

(Interview no. 12)

In fact, journalists have already been in a turbulent position for decades. One interviewee said that already in the '70s it was difficult to do journalism, and another one pointed out that first there was Caracazo in 1989, then the coups in 1992, and the president was accused of corruption, etc., so journalists in Venezuela had learned to deal with conflicts before Chávez's era.

¹²³ “De hecho para ser un país petrolero la tecnología llegó muy rápido. Saber usarlo es otra discusión. Que ocurre cuando una dictadura trae la televisión a Venezuela, lo considera algo más que progreso (como carros últimos, cadillacs etc.) La televisora llega aquí PERO sin marco regulatorio.”

¹²⁴ “Entonces he trabajado en un periódico que tiene una línea muy fuerte contra el gobierno de CAP y CAP arremetió contra ese periódico... El periódico tenía una línea editorial muy marcada. Ese periódico fue censurado durante una suspensión de garantías constitucionales que hubo después del golpe de 4 de febrero. Hubo censores y el ministerio de relaciones interiores fue el que aplicó censura. Ediciones aparecieron así con pedazos en blanco. Entonces para mi no es nada nuevo que mi profesión esté en el centro de muchas críticas y tensiones.”

Based on this it can be said that the Fourth Republic was not an easy place for a journalist since, especially during the last decade, there were several political conflicts and economic problems. There was also some kind of struggle between the media and the governments. However, according to some of the journalists that actually experienced the era, there were some kind of rules to the game or they just seemed to state that "that is how it was. It is not a big deal and the people seem to have forgotten it anyway".

Nothing has really changed. Here I do not present new themes since many of them were already stated above. However, it is interesting to note that many underlined that nothing really changed between the Fourth Republic and Chávez's era. Especially the politics and the media seem to maintain similar aspects as always. There are interviewees thinking like this in all the categories, i.e. both the government and opposition sympathizers. The only difference is that some government-minded state that since the private media have power and know-how, they also keep representing false values and manipulation with all the decades of experience they have.

6.2.2 COLLECTIVE MEMORY DURING CHÁVEZ'S ADMINISTRATION

During Chávez's presidency there were six different views as to what actually happened. They were, 1) self-respect and political awareness, 2) fear, violence, and insecurity have increased, 3) regulations vs freedoms, 4) social security and economic situation, 5) journalists' work, and 6) political divide. Next, these themes are shortly introduced.

Self-respect and political awareness. Especially to the interviewees in categories 1 and 2 that may be described as Chávez's supporters, one of the biggest issues that happened during Chávez's presidency was increasing self-respect and political awareness among citizens. For them it is important to be recognized, to exist in the public sphere as an actor, to participate, and not to be marginalized. According to them, Chávez also offered more opportunities and openness in society. Also, the strict class society rumbled since education, through which it is possible to advance in a society, was not any more just for certain parts of the society and so expanded possibilities for many citizens. A couple of interviewees from category 3 that mentioned this aspect note that it is mostly a *feeling*, not a real act, to be included in the society.

"Before the poor were a technical problem and now they are subjects. This, of course, is symbolic. The people feel included and cared..."¹²⁵

(Interview no. 5)

Another point raised (in categories 1-3, i.e. Chávez's and the opposition's supporters and neutral) is that the citizens have learned new ways to deal

¹²⁵ "Antes los pobres eran problema técnico y ahora los pobres son sujetos. Esto es claro, simbólico. La gente se siente incluida y querida..."

with politics, society, and the media. In category 1, the biggest change has been the direct connection with Chávez, that they can propose things on a higher level. Moreover, it has been important to have recognition for community media.

“After the coup (of 2002) we learned a lot and decided that here the people will start to do it (community media) in their communities because it seemed that everyone was doing it but clandestine. We were born; we existed because of the excess of lies there are in the private media companies. Without it we would not exist.”¹²⁶

(Interview no. 22)

Citizens have also become media-literate. They have realized they should not believe everything that is said in the media. Moreover, they have learned to take advantage of this and know how to get media attention to their causes. They are also active users of social media such as Twitter and Facebook, which often offer them faster the information they need than official sources.

Fear, violence, and insecurity. A point that has been already mentioned in this study (chapters 5.1.3 & 6.1) is the presence of fear, violence, and insecurity. This is mentioned mostly by opposition-minded and neutral persons from categories 2-4. The fear has affected the media in the form of self-censorship. Moreover, several journalists have faced charges in court or physical aggression. Thus, in some of the cases, the fear is just not a feeling but some interviewees have experienced violence targeted towards their colleagues. This, no doubt, affects oneself.

“We have colleagues that have died looking for information. Here in Venezuela in 2002-2003, a colleague went to cover a protest and a police came and they shot and they killed him and this kind of things. Here close is a television station that is called Catia TV and in this building they hit people with tubes and sticks. So journalism in Venezuela is already a profession of high risk especially because they label you and when you go out to the streets you have a label of

¹²⁶ “Pero después del golpe nos tocó y aprendimos muchísimo y decidimos que aquí la gente, el polo se entere haciendo trabajo en las comunidades porque parecía que antes la gente lo estaba haciendo todo en clandestino. Parecía que estábamos haciendo cosas pero todo el mundo callado. Nacimos, existimos por el exceso de las mentiras que hay dentro de las empresas privadas de la comunicación. Nosotros no existiríamos si no fuese así.”

*opposition media or a label of government media, and if you go to a place of opposing side, you are at risk.*¹²⁷

(Interview no. 13)

Yet, it is not just fear of violence, but it is also fear of losing one's job. Therefore, many professionals try to move abroad if they have the opportunity.

One interviewee that currently works in a state media also talks about the problem of violence and insecurity, but in this case it is explained as a problem of families and is told that the media is already tackling with this problem on their part by co-operating with psychologists and sociologists in order to create more peace.

Normatives vs freedom. The interviewees divide between Chávez supporters and others when it comes to normatives and freedoms. Chávez supporters feel there is freedom of expression and there are laws, but not everyone is obeying them. They emphasize there should be certain normatives in a society that everyone would follow. According to the opposition, supporters above-mentioned's fear, together with government actions, have affected the experienced freedom, which is reflected in the content of the media. There are less opinion programs, and news outlets use more the material of ministries.

Social security and economic situation. Social security and economic situation are something that divides opinions. On the one hand, opposition supporters may see the situation quite gloomy since Chávez is wasting oil revenue. On the other hand, Chávez supporters do not share this view at all since, according to them, there is access to goods and services, healthcare, education, and new technologies.

Journalistic work. No doubt, the situation has affected journalistic work during Chávez's era. Many of these issues have already been raised above, including fear of violence and losing one's job and self-censorship, but also access to information has become more difficult. All the interviewees that mention this aspect are opposition supporters and come from categories 2-4. Another aspect that comes across is many media professionals need to have many different jobs in order to survive. For example, they may work in the morning in a radio station on their own program, then write something for newspapers, and in the evening still produce some television or radio programs. It should be remembered these places are not located geographically

¹²⁷ "Nosotros tenemos compañeros que han muerto cubriendo una información, aquí mismo en Venezuela en el año 2002-2003, un compañero fue a cubrir una protesta y un policía pasó y le metió un tiro y lo mató y ese tipo de cosas... Más adelante por acá está una televisora que es del Estado llamada Catia TV y de ese edificio bajaron una serie de personas con palos y tubos y le dieron una golpiza a todos los que estaban allí. ... Entonces el periodismo en Venezuela ya es una profesión de alto riesgo, sobre todo porque te etiquetan, cuando tu eres periodista y cuando sales a la calle ya vas con una etiqueta que si eres de oposición o del gobierno y si vas a un sitio donde esté la oposición, si tu eres del gobierno corres el riesgo de que te agredan y al contrario también sucede."

close to each other so in addition to working, these persons need to spend long hours in Caracas traffic.

Political divide. Political divide is obviously something that has occurred during Chávez's era. This is may be the most dominant view to Chávez's era and the interviewees that mention the issue come from the opposition and Chavistas. They represent categories 1, 3, and 4. The political and media situation has been polarized between two opposing parties and there is no trust.

Of the single events during Chávez's presidency, the most important one is no doubt the coup of 2002. This has especially affected category 1, who may describe the event as life-changing: they awoke as citizens to understand the function of the media. Some opposition supporters may state they made mistakes in 2002, but they do not ponder it that much anymore. Many citizen activists and community media persons describe in detail how the coup of 2002 affected them. It should be noted that many already noticed before the coup how the media was starting to be hostile towards Chávez and, during the coup, they were trying to mobilize people by telling them to go to the presidential palace or later saying everything is calm and the people should stay at home.

"All the media were together making the people to believe that everything is calming down but they were not transmitting what was really happening in the motorway (where the interviewee was at the time). So we started to think how to reach out to the people and tell them what was really happening. We activated what we Venezuelans call radio bamba (grapevine). During that night, community media had an extraordinary role because they did broadcast what was really happening even though the persons behind the coup tried to close down many of them. We started to call abroad. My partner called to CNN en Español, our colleague called to a journalist in Spain, and thanks to the people who stood in front of the media outlets demanding that the media would say the truth (that the people wanted their president back), the media did that."¹²⁸

(Interview no. 17)

Age range of the interviewees varies widely. One would think that it affects the collective memory more than it actually does. Collective memory may get more powerful over time since it is not about an individual's own

¹²⁸ "Todos los medios estaban encadenados para hacerle creer a la gente de que todo estaba calmado pero estos no estaban transmitiendo lo que realmente estaba sucediendo en la autopista. Entonces nosotros estábamos pensando como hacerle llegar a la gente lo que realmente estaba pasando y sucedió algo muy interesante. Activamos lo que los Venezolanos llamamos Radio Bamba, ... Durante esa noche los medios Comunitarios tuvieron un papel extraordinario porque ellos si transmitían lo que estaba sucediendo de verdad y a pesar de que los Golpistas intentaron cerrar varios de estos medios ... comenzamos a llamar al exterior, mi compañero llamó a CNN en Español, nuestra colega llamó a una periodista que vivía en España... Pero gracias a que el pueblo se paró frente a los medios para exigirle que estos dijeran la verdad fue que estos lo hicieron."

experience but more about collective experience, narratives, and identity formation (Zelizer 1995, 217). Thus, living through the events does not seem to be essential in order to have strong opinions about them. In fact, in some cases, it may be even easier to have a strong and clear opinion if you have heard the stories from your family, for example. Nevertheless, personal experience also may produce polarized memories. Hence, it is about the collective groups that one identifies with.

6.3 Concluding remarks

In this chapter the antagonistic conflict was approached from underneath the macro level, focusing on how different media actors construct their respective “common reality.” It is found that values of different societal actors are in the core of the analysis. In antagonism, different actors have become signifiers that not only carry different connotations but also possess assumed values that have become non-negotiable (cf. Mouffe 2005b). This contributes to the antagonism since the enemy is seen as immoral and not an equal adversary. This construction of an enemy also serves in the formation of collective identity since it brings cohesion among the in-group (cf. Taggart 2000). Collective identity is also formed through collective memory since it connects people that seemingly are detached from each other but, through remembering, they share common elements and this brings cohesion between them and thus contributes to forming common values, norms, and beliefs (Liu & Hilton 2005). Hence looking at collective memories of Venezuelan media actors helps us to also understand the groups’ social identity (cf. Condor 1996; Jetten & Hutchison 2011; Smeeke et al. 2011). Remembering is political (cf. Zelizer 1995, 228; Mols & Jetten 2014), and remembering of media actors is especially important because they function as memory makers in a society (cf. Tamm 2008, 502).

How the signifiers are constructed depends on the person’s background, experiences, worldview, and social and economic class. The values of civil society are seen mostly in terms of human rights, including different aspects of freedom of expression. These values are also described as non-political according to some. This implicates that, as discussed in chapter 3, human rights have become a norm beyond political (cf. Douzinas 2008; Mouffe 2005b). Civil society is described as a weak or even marginal power actor in the official society even though, according to some, it is looking for alternate ways of functioning through alternative and community media or technology. Individual journalists might play an important role here as comparing Nieminen’s (2000) different modes revealed.

For some, the media has also become a signifier and therefore they are not able to play a neutral role. In Venezuela, the mediating nature of the media that is in the core of Galtung’s (1999) triangle is questioned. The comparison reveals that in Venezuela, the state media is seen purely as *state* media.

They represent the state but are not communicating towards the citizens, and they are mostly concentrated on the private media by accusing them, defending the state, or broadcasting government propaganda. The view of the private media varies between the categories. Partly depending on the mnemonic base, they may be connected to the “old” regime of the Fourth Republic and neoliberal changes and represent economic power and values or, to some, they represent democracy. Some describe them as a weak actor being just a puppet of the market/opposition. For some, they are fragmented so no overall analysis can be made, and some see them as a medium powerful actor that gets their validation either from civil society or private market actors.

Among Chávez’s supporters there are a couple of lines of thinking. First, there is the citizen activist and community media group that emphasize the empowering feeling to notice that the surrounding society is not indifferent and that they can actually make a difference in it. In their memory, for work there was a drastic difference between the eras before and during Chávez’s administration. They felt they were recognized as societal actors during Chávez’s era. For these persons the change has been something deeply personal: it has changed their identities as citizens and, in this way, is the source of formation of the collective identity of “*el pueblo*.” Second, there is a group that seems to think that the biggest change between the eras before and during Chávez’s presidency are economic and societal. They emphasize better education, better access to healthcare, and better access to daily consumer products. For them, Chavismo represents something more practical, something that has made the life of Venezuelans, and maybe their own personal life as well, easier and more comfortable. For all the Chávez’s supporters there has been a drastic change on a value level that is based on collective memory. They feel that before there were egoistic and corrupted values, and Chávez changed that.

The opposition supporters and the neutral actors are a more varied group and what unites them are negative factors compared to the positive ones the Chavistas experienced as a uniting force. What unites anti-Chavistas are the threats, including economic instability and physical insecurity, that have increased against Venezuelans, their profession, and personal life. This has limited their experienced freedom. For them, according to their collective memory, the era before Chávez was not necessarily ideal but it was more predictable in the sense that everyone knew their place in society. Even the opposition supporters and neutrals may acknowledge the feeling of inclusion many Chavistas experience, but for them it is just a feeling without a base in real life.

It should be noted that in current societies where audiences are more fragmented the construction of shared memory also changes (Edy 2014). This happens in the “post-broadcast world,” but it could also happen in a society of external pluralism. In Venezuela, there are some shared pieces of collective memory among the opposition and Chávez supporters, such as dissat-

isfaction in the Fourth Republic, but there are also some crucial differences as noted above.

Thus, the media actors construct their “common reality” by attaching certain values to different societal actors that have become signifiers partly depending on the collective memory. Feelings of injustice and belittling shade the memories of many of Chávez’s supporters when they look back on the time before Chavismo, or some experience that Venezuelans’ lives have gotten better. Opposition supporters are a more varied group, but during the era of Chávez many of them have experienced feelings of fear and worry.

7 Reconstructing the political conflict

After looking at the conflict on a level of public discourses in print media texts and then deconstructing the variety of discourses underneath the macro level conflict, it is time to reconstruct the conflict situation again by examining how antagonism is constructed (chapter 7.1), what are the roles of antagonism and agonism in democracy and populism (chapter 7.2), and finally what is the role of media in antagonism (chapter 7.3) based on the data researched.

7.1 Hegemony and counter-hegemony in a conflict situation

As all social life consists of conflicts on different levels and spaces it may be difficult to have a steady grip on an ongoing, multi-level, multi-space, multi-actor conflict that is penetrating the whole society. However, to make the situation more tangible and a possible subject of research, the ideas of Gramsci and Mouffe and the analytical tool of Galtung may be used. Especially Mouffe's (2000; 2013) definition of antagonism is useful here as the focus of the research is on the media's role in a political conflict.

To make researching Venezuelan political situation more approachable, it may be thought as a hegemony in a Gramscian sense where the hegemony is trying to spread to different areas of life including, for example, the school system and, most importantly, considering this research, the media. They both reproduce and enforce the existing, prevailing discourses. Thus, the media represents just one aspect of the whole hegemonic system. Moreover, what makes the Venezuelan situation interesting is there are, as noted in this study, two different power blocs: Chávez's and the opposition's supporters' as rivalries that both identify themselves as counter-hegemonic forces battling against an established hegemony (chapter 5). This can be seen also in the media's ownership and content since the mainstream media is roughly divided between the government-supported¹²⁹ and financed media, and the private media that is often seen to represent the market forces and the opposition. However, it should be kept in mind that these power blocs are not formed from united solid forces but they consist of different competing groups that are united under the umbrella term. Chávez's supporters consist of several political groups that vary between their leftist ideological orientation and practical goals, and different citizen groups (cf. Ellner 2008). The opposition includes even more variety of ideologies from left to right, and in addition to them many citizens that are against Chávez for one reason or an-

¹²⁹ In addition to the direct government financing there are other ways of supporting a medium such as financing through advertisement (see chapter 3)

other. Thus, forming a sense of unity within the power blocs becomes crucial in order to maintain the achieved power. Thus, hegemonic battles are not fought only between the power blocs but also within them.

In the media field the hegemonic battles take place in different areas and different spaces between different actors. Sometimes these battles peak and sometimes there is a seemingly calmer situation. This makes it difficult to have a bigger picture of what is actually going on in the political scene of Venezuela. To make things even more complicated, we should remember that it is impossible to draw a line in the past and say when the conflict actually started, and also to identify borders of the conflict to distinguish what aspects of life and society are, and what are not, part of the conflict. As Gramsci (1979) states, we are products of different historical layers so the past is always present in the moment we live in and many aspects of life have an impact on many other aspects of life so it is impossible to separate the conflict from non-conflict.

In order to make a conflict researchable one first needs to define what is the conflict we are researching here. For this Mouffe (2000; 2013) offers useful conceptions of agonism and antagonism. Defined like this it may be said that the focus here is in a conflict that may be called antagonism, a situation where the adversary has become an enemy and there are no mutually-respected rules according to which participants would proceed. Thus, in the Venezuelan political scene, it can be said, prevails antagonism. However, as noted already, Mouffe neither offers tools how to transform antagonism into agonism, nor how agonism proceeds into functioning democratic politics in practice.

Since the conflict situation is so difficult to grasp it may be researched through case studies as was done in this research. This way it is possible to study the discursive struggle between different societal actors like was done in the newspaper analysis to concentrate on some key signifiers. It is also possible to study prevailing power structures of the media field in the form of competing discourses among media actors and the values' mnemonic base. This way it was revealed that different discourses have partly penetrated to the media field as the media actors produce them. However, they do not necessarily just repeat the discourse given from above, but they transform it according to their own values and make it personal (cf. Haug 1987). Similarly, in the media content it is not possible to identify one dominating discourse since the media is not just one but many – even when we are talking about one media outlet. The media are addressing audiences, which are varied, and at the same time they are reproducing the discourses of different power holders, which are also varied. Here the mediating nature of the media that Galtung (1999) emphasizes becomes explicit. As a result, there is a struggle over discourses on the pages of a newspaper, while a newspaper, which is trying to hold on to the ideals of neutral journalism, is representing all of this in its pages – at the same time steering the overall conversation towards the chosen editorial line.

Thus, the underlining question of if hegemony actually exists is not as relevant as the question of how penetrated the different discourses are and which audiences they are directed at. Yet, at the same time, we should acknowledge the difference between hegemony and domination. Domination is something that is forced from above and is not penetrating the whole society. Moreover, domination is something that is needed when a power bloc cannot trust that it possesses the hegemonic force. Hegemony is voluntary and often subconscious since it is not questioned. It is the norm. Domination is the use of force and abuse of power. According to many of the interviewees in categories 2, 3, and 4, the state of Venezuela is in fact relying on domination. The state, especially the government, uses weapons of intimidation, fear, economic sanctions, and the law. This creates a situation where the state in fact may be weak even though it looks strong at first glance (cf. Waisbord 2009). For political purposes, constructing a strong hegemonic enemy seems to be the strategy the political actors have taken advantage of on both sides of the conflict. This can easily be combined with the audiences of the media. Thus, they both create a certain kind of unity. Constructing a strong enemy serves as creating an external threat to the in-group and this brings cohesion within the in-group (Taggart 2000), and the feeling of unity and collective identity. Similarly, media may address their (assumed) readers and talk to them, creating a feeling of readership and, in the case of more marginal media, also talk to them directly, constructing a unity (see chapter 5.1).

Certainly there are some hegemonic structures prevailing in Venezuela. Venezuelans are highly supportive of democracy but not just any democracy since the vast majority of Venezuelans define democracy in liberal terms (Canache 2012). This is also found in this research. Most of the media actors define democracy by emphasizing liberal democratic aspects. Only the interviewees in category 1 support participatory democracy, i.e. valued participation of ordinary citizens over other aspects of democracy, although even they admit that it is still a work in progress and far from the ideal.

The ideal neutral media does not possess any political desires. Neutral professional journalism (Mancini 2000), and thus also the role of media, is something that is questioned in Venezuela by many actors in their rhetoric. Some even deny the whole idea of neutral media. For some, the media are about journalists and how they position themselves in a society (cf. Nieminen 2000; see chapters 3.1 & 6.1.2). The journalists should not function among the power holders but they should be closer to civil society and help the people to articulate their ideas and worries (mode 4 representative type). Also, for some, the whole idea of traditional media should be questioned and the media should be just like any of the actors in civil society (mode 4 participatory type) (Nieminen 2000). A severe problem in the Venezuelan media system during Chávez's presidency was the state media's tendency to report on positive news, supporting the achievements of the government, and the private media's tendency to concentrate on negative subjects (many interviews). Journalistic routines such as news criteria may be in the background of nega-

tive and critical framing (see Van Dalen 2012), but also the mainstream media's tendency to echo hegemonic power (see Mazzoleni 2003, 8).

Cultural hegemony (Hall 1987), i.e. setting the norm, is also an aspect the media has a role to play in (see chapter 3.1.1). As remarked earlier, a part of Venezuelan society felt excluded in the society before Chávez's presidency. This feeling of exclusion was not only political but also cultural and the media has a role to play in this. As one of the interviewees phrases it: "the audio-visual media are something that the minority does for a majority" (interview no. 15), and because the audiences are large the media, and thus the media elite behind them, also may potentially influence a large part of the population. Individual television channels may not necessarily have such a big impact if they get, for example, just 5 percent of the audience, but some cultural norms may be repeated over and over again in the mainstream media so it becomes a part of daily life and is not even questioned anymore. This cultural hegemony may have affected the identities of Venezuelans as they were, and often still are, portrayed in a certain way in the media and culture. This kind of cultural hegemony was not in the core of this research but its impact should still be acknowledged.

One interviewee describes the situation like this:

*"In the private media we keep on seeing blonde women, white women, women with breasts... and this may be a part of Venezuelan identity but it is not the Venezuelan identity. In the private media we still often see in the programs common people, people with limited resources like people that speak poor language, irresponsible people, but these same people we see in the public media as developing projects, people that work, people that defend ideas. They invite two or three persons to a program and while filming these persons talk bad and they fight in front of the cameras, and many viewers who watch these programs think that that is how we are. They think that the Venezuelans talk bad and we look ugly and we dress ugly since that is how it is shown (in the media)."*¹³⁰

(Interview no. 15)

This way the production and consumption of entertainment, especially popular telenovelas but also conversational programs, are a part of cultural hegemony.

¹³⁰ "En los medios privados seguimos viendo a las chicas rubias, chicas blancas, chicas que tienen senos... esto puede ser una parte de la identidad venezolana pero no es la identidad venezolana... En el medio privado en muchos programas todavía vemos a la gente del pueblo, a la gente de escasos recursos como gente incapaz, gente que habla mal, gente irresponsable pero a esta misma gente en el medio público los vemos como gente que desarrolla proyectos, como gente que trabaja, como gente que defiende una idea... Ellos invitan a dos o tres personas a los medios a que mientras los filman se hablen mal y se caigan a golpes en frente de las cámaras y muchos espectadores que ven esos programas piensan que así somos nosotros. Piensan que los Venezolanos hablamos mal y nos vemos feo y nos vestimos feo..."

At first glance it would be easy to state – or at least this is what is often said on the macro level about both of the parties of the conflict – that in Venezuela prevails Freedman’s (2014, 22-25; 2015; see chapter 3.1) control paradigm where a dominant media bloc is steering the public discussion in order to maintain hegemonic discourse. However, when we look at the situation closely we can see there still exists the idea of neutral journalism in the background even though the advocacy and opinion journalisms are quite strong (see chapter 5.1). On the part of the state media it may be said they are not dominant media with a dominant hegemonic discourse because they have such a small share of the audience. However, what may be discussed is if the state is trying to enforce the hegemonic discourse through means other than the state media and by using *cadena*s. On the part of the private media it can be said they could have a hegemonic discourse when we look at the share of audiences, but the question is if we can treat the private media as one actor or if they consist of a fragmented group of different mediums. Nevertheless, we should note that the confrontation and polarization enforce the discourses of both of the parties since they are repeated and responded to with aggression. Thus, their importance grows. Therefore, contradiction paradigm (Freedman 2014, 25-29; 2015; see chapter 3.1) where the media possesses power, but still different voices in the public sphere and are able to influence them, may be closer to what is happening in real life on the macro level. This view also highlights the fact that hegemony is never stable but there are always struggles on different levels and sites as noted above.

7.2 Democracy and populism

There are many different ways to look at a democratic society. Democracy could be thought of as a process of aiming to achieve public good (Dahl 1989), but there are many different opinions and views as to how it is done. Thus, democracy is a “floating but anchored” concept (Whitehead 2002) in this sense. One of the most essential starting points for the discussion is the question between collectivism and individualism (Whitehead 2010). However, one aspect of democracy could not be emphasized more in light of the Venezuelan situation – or lack of it – during its history until the present: its recognizing of individuals as moral and political equals (cf. Benhabib 1996b, 68). This could be applied to collectivities as well. If individuals are considered morally and politically equal they are all automatically included in society and the public sphere. In democracy it is evident to have a conflict of values and interests in social life, but recognizing others as equals makes it possible to discuss the values and interests in an agonistic way without questioning the others’ right to exist as an equal political subject.

In the history of Venezuela exclusion of some parts of society from the democratic sphere has been a trend. This especially applies to the underprivileged and leftist sectors of society (chapter 2.1). This is, no doubt, some-

thing prevalent in many societies since the base of politics is an us/them division (cf. Mouffe 2000). However, this division does not require exclusion and, in Venezuela, the exclusion has had longstanding consequences as the popularity of Chávez may be partly explained by it: Chávez recognized these sectors as political actors while leftism was slowly accepted into mainstream politics in the 1990s (chapter 2.1). As there was a gap between the power blocs and the people (cf. Laclau 2005a; 2005b) during the Fourth Republic, this created a feeling of distance and exclusion from the general public sphere. Moreover, the exclusion of the political left from mainstream politics generated these gaps.

In addition to this and separation of political powers from the masses, the historical narrative of Venezuelan exceptionalism (chapter 2.1) was something that was not shared among all the parts of the population (chapter 6.2). This also contributed to the feeling of exclusion since individuals did not share the public narrative. Moreover, there was weak trust in the political system and the parties (cf. Arnold & Samuels 2011, 40; Panizza 2005, 11-13) which gave room to the private media to become an arena for the political battle (cf. Kitzberger 2012, 133) and also let populism have a foothold in society.

As suggested in the previous research (Samet 2013), my findings also confirm there are two opposing sides in Venezuela that have populist tendencies. Samet (2013) argues that in Venezuela there are two competing populisms which are not similar mirror images of each other. The two opposing political parties “subsume preexisting racial, gender, and class divisions, which are bound up with deep histories of imperialism, colonialism, and revolutionary struggle in the Americas” (Samet 2013, 528).

Samet (2013) remarks that blaming the enemy unites the two opposing sides. Therefore, the stepping stone of his research is the experienced victimhood in populism. Yet, it is not just about victimhood as stated by this current research, but it is about constructing an enemy as a signifier in order to construct collective identities. Thus, the two parties are also linked together in the battle for the people. Both sides want to claim the people by stating they understand and represent them better. The citizens bring the social power that is needed in order to make changes and rule. These two angles to Venezuelan populism both are about constructing an identity. Like Laclau (2005a) points out, populism is about constructing the very unity, i.e. the identity of the group. In Venezuela this group is referred to as *el pueblo*, the people, especially in Chávez’s rhetoric (cf. Lander 2005). Yet, in Venezuela, like elsewhere in Latin America, *el pueblo* has a very distinct racial and socio-economic connotation, which “Chavismo fashioned into a powerful, positive political identity” (Samet 2013, 529). That may be also why the opposing side uses such terms as (us) Venezuelans when approaching the people; they want to make a different connotation.

This research examines the construction of the people in political and media discourses, construction of the identity of the included and excluded.

Since it is studied that Chávez's support does not only come from lower economic parts of the population, which *el pueblo* is normally connected to, but across different socio-economic classes (Lupu 2010), Samet (2013, 529) points out that Chavismo does not just express the discontent of the people but it also produces it in order to legitimize its political actions. This can be said about the opposition as well. This may be seen as giving expression to something that already exists in the minds of the population, but by articulating it the political actors make it more visible.

The "us" and "them" are constructed in the newspapers and interviews in a certain way, but a group that is also important is the ignored (cf. Sonwalkar 2005). Ignored in the studied newspapers are often the voters of the opposing side. They do not exist in the rhetoric and they are not seen as a part of *el pueblo*. This is especially the case in Chavismo while in other newspapers, especially in the pre-election rhetoric, it was emphasized that all Venezuelans are included to the opposition's *el pueblo* and they will govern everyone equally and with respect when/if the opposition will step into power. Yet, the voters of Chavismo were not even in this case directly addressed, but it was just let vaguely understood that "everyone" would be included (maybe if they change their political orientation).

Another group of ignored is the large group of Venezuelans who reject both Chavismo and the opposition politics (Toro 2012). In the popular language, these indifferent people are referred to as "ni-nis." Often these persons are not seen in the public sphere because populist antagonism forces the people to choose their side ¹³¹. The question for the future is how long such a large portion of the population, the voters of the opposing side and "ni-nis," may be excluded. What the antagonism has caused is the different parties of the conflict have set up their own camps on a macro level and, because the opponent is seen as an enemy, it is impossible to have a meaningful dialogue with them. Instead, they are labeled with certain values that are simply incompatible with one's own values.

7.3 Media forming collective identities

All the interviewees agreed that the ones who suffer the most in the conflict situation are the citizens (chapter 6). All they basically want are human rights, of which the media is connected to as an agent of freedom of expression. As Mouffe (2005b) pointed out, human rights are a political issue but they are raised as something beyond politics. Thus, there should be discus-

¹³¹ An example of this from the ethnographic notes of 2007: "A man in his mid 20s told me that he dips his little finger into ink to make it look like that he has voted. His family was divided between Chavez and opposition supporters and he was just tired of all the politics. In order to stop different members of his family from bothering him by telling to vote for the 'correct' candidate and making him choose the side, he instead preferred to tell them that he had already voted by showing them his pinky." (In Venezuela, after voting, each voter dips his/her pinky finger into ink at the electoral board)

sion over human rights: what they are and how they should be executed in real life. They are not only a legal matter since society's values and political interests affect them. This is also connected to Whitehead's (2010) division of democracies between liberal and republican, and to the question of emphasizing either individual or collective aspects.

The citizens need information in order to make educated decisions in their life and the media should be the organism to deliver it. This may concern abstract themes or something as mundane as receiving information about traffic accidents and knowing how to avoid the jammed areas. However, as we have seen, the situation in real life is not so simple. First, following daily news makes an individual only a potentially better citizen, and, second, even though engagement and participation may be seen as individual's activities, this engagement and participation in the political scene requires connecting with others, i.e. forming collectivities (Dahlgren 2009, 81). Thus, individuals do not function in a vacuum but are always connected to several different groups. These groups may consist of peers of daily life or to more abstract groups that do not have any physical connection. The power of media is to construct these imagined communities (Anderson 1983), to construct the feeling of "us" among the people who do not have any physical connection with each other, to create a sense of belonging within a group that may be physically scattered.

In the newspaper content studied, the people are a subject of a discursive contest since power holders are claiming to reach out to the people. However, citizens seldom get their voice heard according to the majority of the media actors. There is no connection between the power blocs and the people even though the power holders are claiming to have it since the majority of the interviewees describe the situation as a battle of the power blocs with the people being the underdogs living in their own separate reality.

As noted above, democratic recognition of others is essential in a functioning democracy and for human rights. This takes us from antagonism closer to agonism. However, as described in chapter 7.1, the conflict consists of several arenas, levels, and sites. Thus, the formation of one's identity is affected by many factors. Hence, a more market-driven approach should also be taken into account. As the individual's identity becomes more important in current market-driven societies, the identities also become more complex, flexible, and individual. Thus, there is a complexity where "several 'regimes' of identity, driven by different needs and interests, operate side by side, and can be combined in different ways." (Machin & van Leeuwen 2007, 55.) These identities may be constructed by nation states, different groups, and large (global) corporations. Thus, it is important to ask how people construct their own identities using these different elements.

Since I am not studying audiences, the question above cannot be answered directly. However, we can look at the situation from the perspective of the data researched. Media consumption may be seen as part of ongoing identity work (e.g. Alghasi 2011; Mainsah 2011), but it should be remembered

there are several different ways to consume media products. For some it has an essential role in everyday life, for some it is less important. For some it is important to follow mainstream media news and for some the media consumption is limited to watching foreign sitcoms on satellite channels, but nevertheless it may be considered a part of identity work.

As pointed out already many times (see chapters 2.1, 5.1 & 6.1), the Chavista grassroots level felt they had a more direct connection with Chávez than the party members. They saw political parties as something corrupted and themselves as something more sincere and dedicated to the community. This is why they directed their proposals straight to the state level and did not have to deal with the party. This direct connection with Chávez also serves as a function of identity building. The people felt they are part of the decision-making process since they were heard and could make proposals. This direct connection also existed in the community media.

Chávez was also actively building the image of direct connection since he was portrayed as one with the people, connecting with them, and the party level and even the rest of the state level were shown as something official, bureaucratic, and separate from the people (chapter 5.2). Chávez was active, but especially active among the people. Similarly, Panizza (2005, 19-20) points out that in populism the leader – through narratives and symbols like the leader's own body and personal life – functions as a signifier of a harmonized people. The media mediate and form this message. Moreover, because Chávez openly showed his passion, he may be perceived as devoted to his cause and that makes him more believable and trustworthy in the eyes of the audience. Passion may be a sign of integrity and, in general, people have more trust in leaders who are guided from above (Hall 2005, 123-124). Thus, the direct connection was experienced on the emotional level – in the people's feelings – and it was actively constructed in the public discourse and image building. This contributed to the collective identity of the people and included them as active societal actors. Yet, some experienced a conflict between this experienced identity and the image the mainstream (private) media was producing for telenovelas.

To look at the identity building in the media we need to focus on whom the discourses in the media are directed and what is their function. During Chávez's administration the state media had only a small percentage of the overall audience and they were mainly consumed by radical Chavistas (Quiñones 2012). In addition to that, in chapter 6.1 it was revealed the state media is seen to represent the state, and they are not so much directed to communicating with civil society but are more concentrated on the private media according to most of the interviewees (even though their aim in the future may be different). This implies the government media content is not directed to broad audiences since even the Chavistas in the research do not relate to it. As suggested earlier, it may be directed more to constructing identities among the most devoted supporters of the movement, and to widen the gap between the others and the Chavistas in order to bring more cohesion among

the group (chapter 5.1.4). In this sense they serve the important function of constructing identities among Chavistas.

The opposition is equally relying on populist politics and trying to approach the people in their discourse. They use similar cues like symbols (e.g. clothing, general habitus) and they also use the discourse that they are the ones who are together with the people and understand their needs. Thus, the opposition is also aiming for identity building through a common feeling of unity. Nevertheless, at the same time the opposition leaders are also trying to separate themselves from the common discourse of bourgeois by their clothing. On the opposition side, to succeed in constructing collective identities it's more difficult since the identity work is partly based on negative and abstract factors (see chapter 6.2) such as common experiences of fear and insecurity. Moreover, it should be remembered that ideologically the opposition consists of more varied groups than Chavismo. That also makes constructing common identities more challenging.

In addition to that, even though the private media does have the majority of the audience, it may be questioned how united the media apparatus behind the opposition is since each medium may have their distinct focus. Thus, the identity building is more difficult in a larger group since each medium directs its message to whom they consider their audience and some concentrate on answering the accusations of the government media or attacking them. Because of this fragmented nature it may also be more difficult for the opposition to form a unified identity among a large mass and to support them like some of the past elections have proven (even though their main theme in many elections, including the pre-election 2012, was "unity").

In this process of competing for the unity of the "people" it is essential to remember that many have dropped out of the political sphere. These politically indifferent (or "ni-nis") should not be blamed since they simply lack passion and "without passion people lack the energy and commitment to take political action, because they lack the sense that their actions will have any meaning or effect" (Hall 2005, 125). They are not involved in politics because they do not care about the issues discussed in politics, they do not raise any emotions in them, they lack the vision how things could be or ought to be, and maybe, but most importantly, they do not have hope these visions, or at least some progress realizing these visions, could be done (Hall 2005, 125). That is why they have withdrawn from the political scene even though they would have the possibility to at least act in the elections.

The media has an essential role and they are an important element in the process of constructing a society's ideas and values (Sreberny 1999). Thus, as noted before in chapter 3.1, the values in hegemony also rise from below (cf. Haug 1987) as the individuals adopt different values and make them personal. Therefore, the process of forming one's identity is a key point here. Moreover, the media does not participate only in the process of constructing society's ideas and values, but they offer a "vital tool" that integrates into society a symbolic arena for the process of becoming a citizen (Sjöberg & Rydin 2011).

The media also participates in the construction of a nation and a sense of belonging (Andersson 1983) as discussed above.

However, it should be remembered that in addition to the national mainstream media, which is the subject of this research, there are also other mediums that should not be understated. Georgiou (2006, 56) is talking about diasporas, but the idea suits the Venezuelan situation as well when she states that other than national, mainstream media also participates in the formation of the imagined community since they offer alternative spaces of belonging in everyday life. Thus, the domination of the mainstream media is crumbling in the era of Internet as a constructor of the “people.” This may be also seen in the data as some of the interviewees (category 1) highlighted the participation of the people and how they, tired of the macro level conflict, have already taken action and have started to activate by participating and producing their own content.

Democratic theory and rhetoric usually, even though they encourage participation, do not recognize or even deny the motivational factors behind them, i.e. emotions and passions (Dahlgren 2009, 83). Collective memory and passion, in fact, are closely connected to each other since collective memory shapes values and passions that are based on morals and beliefs. As mentioned already in the introduction, people care only about issues that raise feelings in them so passions are always present in politics (Dahlgren 2009, 83-84; Hall 2005). Reason and passion can be distinguished conceptually but in practice they are always entangled (Walzer 2002), so considering feelings does not apply only to Venezuelan politics but to all societies in general. In fact, Hall (2005, 13-15) points out that, first, reason and passion both form the psyche and therefore passion should not be thought of as a foreign power that tries to take over the psyche, and, second, passions have reasons so there is always a rational element involved in the passion.

Passions are crucial for any agency, including civic agency (Dahlgren 2009, 85) and, as stated above, there is always a reason behind passion. Thus, calling the opponents impossible to understand because they do not use reason but are taken over by passion lacks logic. Moreover, passions are needed for “making political choices, creating political community, and motivating political action” (Dahlgren 2009, 85). Hence, passions are required in order to make decisions in society, i.e. they form an essential part of democracy. In fact, it is resignation and disaffection that make people ignorant and obedient to the dominant political order (Hall 2005, 216). Saying this, however, requires us to distinguish passion as a motivational force from passion as a form of expression (Dahlgren 2009, 85) even though in real life we need to make judgements based on our best knowledge and cannot necessarily separate these two from the others’ actions (Hall 2005). Also, passion is not only an individual’s thriving force but also has a collective aspect. Passion links people together.

“A shared passion for democratic values can generate civic bonds and affinity, and trust among strangers, and lay the foundation for larger civic identities and practices, thereby maintaining and strengthening civic cultures.”

(Dahlgren 2009, 86)

The media has a role to play in creating and re-enforcing passions, and the media also has a part in collective identity creation since the media addresses a specific group of people, the audience. This imaginative audience in mind, the media frames the news in a certain way since the purpose of broadcasting/publishing/airing something is to speak to somebody. The re-enforcing may be emphasized here since individuals tend to “recall information that confirms their desired outcome(s) or goals” (Castells 2009, 153-154). Thus, it is more difficult to create new passions and emotions. This also applies to the educated and intellectuals since a “higher level of knowledge provides people with more intellectual resources for self-rationalization in support of their emotionally induced misperceptions” (Castells, 2009, 153). Thus, the people have a tendency to believe what they want to believe.

According to Frank (2004), when citizens are making decisions, values affect them more than their (self-)interests in the process. As Western (2007, 125) phrases it: “people vote for the candidate who elicits the right feeling, not the candidate who presents the best arguments.” Thus, emotions and values are essential in politics in general and not only in Venezuelan politics. In fact, as it happens, when the clear feeling does not exist or the people “do not trust the connection between their feelings and the mediating instances enough, they drop out from the electoral process or turn to political cynicism” (Castells 2009, 154), which may explain the large amount of politically indifferent citizens in Venezuela.

One aspect of the importance of emotions in politics is people’s loyalty or partisanship towards specific political parties. There is an emotional factor because experiences of partisanship are often connected to many emotional events with family and friends in people’s minds. Beliefs, however, might be a key factor to determine political behavior. Thus, beliefs are dependent on desires, so in order to change their beliefs, the citizens need to change what they want. (Castells 2009, 154-155.)

8 Conclusions

The aim of this research was to dive underneath the macro level political conflict of Venezuela and to see beyond the distinct rhetoric that may polarize the situation even further and this way answer the question of, what is the role of media in antagonism using the Venezuelan case as an example. The hegemonic discourses have penetrated through Venezuelan society. As isolated comments these would not make much difference, but as these discourses have penetrated the media content and daily speech, we start to see the problem. As the Chavista side builds a new nation and nationalism, it makes the other side feel they are not included, and, even further, that they are attacked since their values and ideas are not included. Similarly, as the opposition side is using harsh language that blames the Chavista side for forgetting all the democratic ideals, the Chavistas take this as an attack against them because, in fact, they feel the “old” democracy was not a “real” democracy that took into account all the citizens and now the Chavista government is trying to change that.

Because of this situation it is important to note there is not just one populist actor in the Venezuelan society but actually the opposition has adopted populist politics as confirmed by this research (chapter 5; cf. Samet 2013). That is also why Venezuela makes such an excellent case for studying the media’s role in antagonism.

There are two competing populist discourses on the macro level and the mainstream media is participating as an integral element in this antagonistic situation. However, it cannot be said if one of the parties has urged the other party to apply populism since it should be remembered there is a strong tradition of populism in Latin America. Also, at times, traditional Venezuelan political parties have been identified as populists in the past (esp. AD). (Chapter 3.2.2.) Moreover, what is distinct in the Venezuelan situation is that the politics have penetrated all aspects of life (Bisbal 2009a, 16) so such an extreme condition also makes the situation more accessible to study.

In this research plural voices within hegemonies are emphasized. Therefore, the power struggle is fought not just between (counter-)hegemonies but also within them. Already in chapter 3.1.3 it was pointed out that dominant ideology, i.e. hegemony, is never a stable structure. Concentrating on the Venezuelan conflict we can examine how the seemingly more or less unitary hegemonies on a macro level are constructed and sustained by partly using mainstream media.

It was found that certain elements of the antagonistic conflict turn into signifiers, such as the “people.” First, the construction of some specific signifiers – the people, leader, and enemy – was studied in the media (chapter 5) and then the construction of equivalential chains attached to them was examined more thoroughly in media actors’ discourses (chapter 6). This revealed the importance of the question of how the “us,” the collective identity and the

feeling of unity, is constructed in the media in antagonism. In the background there is, of course, the definition of populism as constructing unity among a part of a population (Laclau 2005a). Venezuelan media are partly divided to support different (counter-)hegemonies due to interconnectedness between the political and media systems, which is reflected in the media ownerships and contents. However, it should be remembered that different parties of the conflict consist of a variety of groups (see chapter 2) for which the media's role as unifying the groups and constructing common identities becomes significant in the power struggle. In this sense, the media may be seen as an essential part of populist politics. Thus, one of the functions of the media in antagonistic conflict is to construct unity among the audiences.

Hence, there are two important elements that should be remembered when analyzing Venezuelan situation. First, history, especially in the form of collective memory, is an essential element to understand the Venezuelan conflict since the almost picture-perfect image of Venezuelan exceptionalism was not experienced by all its citizens. In the general history and politics, certain parts of the population were marginalized based on their political orientation and socio-economic status. (Chapters 2.1 & 6.2.) This gave a stern ground for different historical narratives that were used to construct political identities among Chávez's supporters and contributed to the feelings of empowerment as citizens recognized themselves as societal actors, and was a drastic change from experienced egoistic and corrupted values of the Fourth Republic to the more humane values of Chávez's era.

Second, an often forgotten factor is the variety of movements within a movement, i.e. how Chavismo consists of at least four different groups (Ellner 2008) that are united under the umbrella of Chavismo and not the least by the persona of Chávez himself as a signifier. In addition to this there are two distinct approaches of Chavismo: party politics and a grassroots-level movement. This was also seen in the way citizen activists positioned themselves and experienced the direct connection with Chávez by bypassing the party structure (chapters 2 & 6). Similarly, the opposition consists of several ideologically different parties that are united to oppose and offer an alternative to Chavismo. The third significant, but often forgotten, group are political indifferents that have lost their interest and passion in politics without the vision and hope things could change in the future.

Thus, underneath the macro level conflict there are different voices, which are not often heard and are in fact commonly forgotten in the public macro level conversation that concentrates on the "boxing ring" of the main television channels (see chapter 1). This was something that especially arose in the interview data. The mainstream media tends to echo hegemonic powers (Mazzoleni 2003, 8) in their content so in the general public sphere these non-dominant voices are not heard. However, as noted by this research, the

voices in the mainstream media are also more plural than often thought¹³². This is why the two sets of data support each other nicely.

The media, especially the mainstream private media, has always been entangled in Venezuelan politics and economics since there has been a clientelistic relationship throughout the decades between the mainstream media's (economic) powers and the political elite, sometimes even mixing the two since the media elite has taken a clear stance on the country's economic politics (e.g. Coppedge 1994, 160; Ellner 2008, 84; chapter 2.2). In this sense the situation during the presidency of Chávez was nothing new. The tendencies of instrumentalization of media and political parallelism (Mancini 2012; see chapter 3.1) continued as before, this time bringing into the picture new dominant actors of state media. There prevailed political parallelism in the sense it was common knowledge to know the stance of certain mediums (although sometimes the connections were not always explicit, which implies instrumentalization), but this image may have gotten a bit blurry at times in the 2010s when several mediums changed their owners¹³³. At the same time, there was firm ground for instrumentalization since there was a personalized party and a long tradition of clientelism.

However, the importance of the media in general, including community media (Rodriguez 2011; see chapter 3.2), generally grows during a time of conflict since, in turmoil, the people need more information and they actively look for it in the media (Loveless 2008) and it gives them a feeling of control (Voltmer 2013, 113). This may also be seen in Venezuela where the audience of the state channel VTV has usually increased during a time of turmoil when citizens want to access the government's point of view (Weisbrot & Ruttenberg 2010; ethnographic notes). In addition to that, the media's function does not limit itself to just journalistic coverage, but the community media may serve as a reminder there still is normal life (Rodriguez 2013, 253), and report on daily micro level worries citizens experience like the poor condition of the streets in the neighbourhood. In Venezuela, the importance of community media and other media activism among the citizens is especially important for the persons participating in them (Chapter 6). Moreover, in the background, there is always the media's ability to mobilize citizens and to strengthen their cognitive competencies (Voltmer 2013, 111). The media is also part of identity work.

In the introduction, Galtung's model of different societal actors was introduced. On the one hand, Galtung's model starts with a certain kind of balance between the state and the market. This limits its use since in antagonism there is always a struggle between different actors who want more economic, political and/or social power. On the other hand, Galtung's model

¹³² One of the most common comments among Venezuelans about the mainstream media when conducting field work was that there was just two voices in the mainstream media: one belonging to the government-minded and the other to the opposition-minded.

¹³³ Globovisión, Cadena Capriles (the publisher of *Últimas Noticias*) and *El Universal* all changed their owners in 2012-2013 (Neuman 2014).

does not focus on the interaction between different societal actors, which is essential in order to research power relations. In the Venezuelan conflict, interaction between different actors is done according to the media actors by using rhetoric, law, manipulation, and intimidation. These different types of interaction tell us something about the power relations in the society. First, different societal actors are competing for hegemony since no one seems to have ultimate power on all levels, i.e. economic, social and political power (cf. Cañizález 2014).

Second, civil society is the underdog in the equation since there is a common understanding (among the interviewees) that it is the normal citizens that suffer in the conflict. Nevertheless, civil society seems to be finding new ways since citizens are activating by producing their own media content in community and alternative media projects, or on the Internet or directly contacting established media outlets. Moreover, civil society's position in the equation is not fixed (figure 3); it may be seen as a base of the state or the private media, or standing more on its own and even a bit isolated depending on the perspective.

Third, since the state is a different kind of actor with the power of jurisprudence, it also has the power to control or to intimidate with the control, which, of course, requires some lack of separation of powers. Here we should also remember the clientelistic form of power (Guerrero 2014) where different institutions, including state institutions, and individual persons may expect something in return or they may expect certain actors to behave in a certain way. Moreover, intimidation is a different kind of power because fear penetrates the society and it personally affects citizens. It enables controlling without the actual act of control and the question of the existence of the real threat becomes meaningless. One of the interviewees told me after an interview:

"This is one of the problems: I should not be afraid to say my name. Many people do not want to say their name because they are afraid that they will lose their jobs or that they are going to be on a list¹³⁴."

Thus, the fear exists among many citizens and media actors and they adjust their behaviour according to it. The fear is also one of the opposition's discourses in the newspaper study since it was common to state that the people voted despite the fear. Thus, it is not just the state media or the state that contribute to the atmosphere of fear. Producing the discourse of fear keeps the fear as a central theme vibrant in the minds of the people no matter who produces it. This demonstrates the difficulty of the opposition to construct collective identities since the identity is based more on abstract and negative aspects like fear and insecurity (see chapters 6 & 7.3).

¹³⁴ E.g. Tascon list (see chapter 2.1.2).

When looking at the media as a site of conflict it may be stated there are several discursive struggles not only between different media actors but also within the media contents, i.e. the final media products including different power holders: the opposing political forces, the media outlet, and also different voices within the political movements are presented in the media texts. In the newspaper analysis it was shown that even though different political power holders' discourses are able to penetrate the media content, the press may use different kinds of journalistic strategies – including volume, quotes, sarcasm, and layout – to make a statement and still convey the ideal of neutral journalism (chapter 5.1).

Yet, in order to better understand the conflict we need to look at the values behind the action (figure 3, see also appendix 7). All the different societal actors in the model have their own set of values and interests that are behind all the visible conflicts and these core values steer not only the rational action but also the passions (cf. Hall 2005).

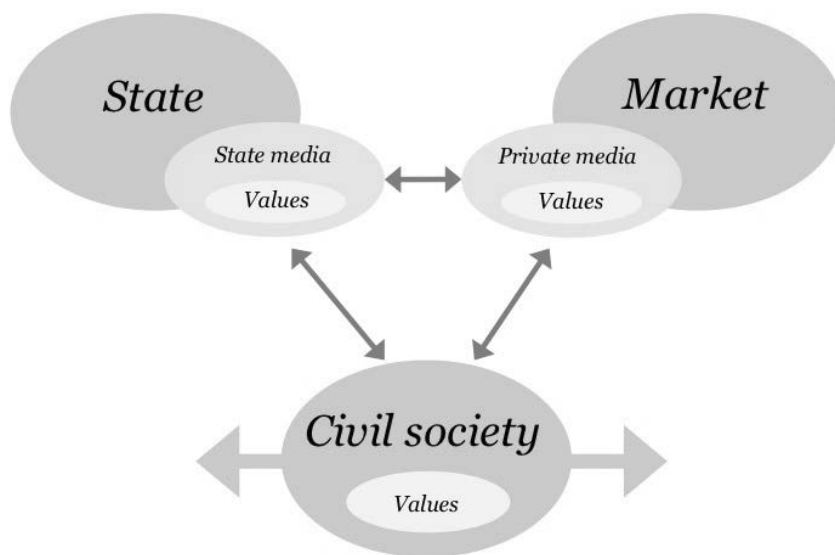


Figure 3. Media society and values.

In the antagonistic conflict of Venezuela, the media was cultivating rhetoric that opposes empathy by calling opponents with several degrading names. When the enemy or enemies are faceless and de-humanized by calling them fascist, oligarchs, bourgeois, dictators, or autarchs, it is possible to attach them to purely negative values and deny and condemn their every endeavour. It is easier not to feel empathy and not to recognize them as equal democratic actors. This also secures the goodness of oneself as stated by Mouffe (2005b).

Thus, demonizing also serves the function of creating collective identity among the in-group (cf. Taggart 2000).

When talking about news media, hard facts and objectivity are often highlighted. However, the people only care about issues that raise some kind of emotion in them (Hall 2005) so it may be assumed that if the audience bothers to follow certain news that the news raise some feelings in them. Thus, emotions are also at the core of news production. Therefore, the question remains: Could the news media contribute to easing out the antagonistic conflict by creating opportunities for feeling empathy¹³⁵ instead of negativity? At least Landsberg (2009, 228) sees this possibility in the case of films. Mouffe (2005c) suggests that instead of trying to ground democratic politics in a common purpose, we could ground it on “ethico-political’ bond based on a sense of loyalty to one another.” This makes citizenship not just a legal status but a form of identification. (Mouffe 2005c, 65-66.)

One important consequence of two strong populist forces on a macro level is that citizens have learned to live in a world of polarized information in one way or another. Many journalists say that at least they are personally doing good journalism, even though some do not always meet the expectations, but from the point of view of the citizens common people have also learned to play according to prevailing rules, and to some extent instrumentalize media for their own purposes. Some private media journalists remark that even Chavistas approach them when they have concerns because they know the state media is not interested in negative issues. As active citizens approaching the media they know they will get the wanted coverage to their concern by doing this. This is certainly an interesting aspect found in the data. However, the focus of this study was not the perspective of audiences in general and how they experience their media consumption and how they have learned to use the media so it suits their needs. Thus, it must be left for further research to tackle.

External pluralism (chapter 3.1.4) makes the situation more difficult since there is no common arena for public speech. However, it should be remembered there are still some media outlets that are followed by moderate Chavistas, moderate opposition supporters, and “ni-nis” like Televen, Venevisión and Últimas Noticias (Quiñones 2012). Thus, it would be interesting to study how they specifically construct the audience and how they contribute to the audience’s identity building. In chapter 5 only *Últimas Noticias* was examined and it was found it has a more distant, but also maybe a more diverse, approach to the signifiers than other newspapers in the data. At the same time, the situation of external pluralism may offer new opportunities since this opens up the doors for the citizens to look for new forms of communication using the Internet, social media, and community and alternative media. This also changes the whole function of the media in the conflict when

¹³⁵ In empathy, engaging emotionally and intellectually with others different from oneself is essential (Landsberg 2009).

the media outlets or the political and economic power holders are not the ones guarding the information (cf. chaos paradigm in Freedman 2014, 19-22; 2015; democratic mode in Nieminen 2000; chapter 3.1.5).

Most Venezuelans recognize (liberal) democracy as an ideal form of organizing society (Canache 2012; chapter 6.1) and they still have the common and shared framework of the society even though their conception of democracy may widely vary. This way democracy is for them a “floating but anchored” (Whitehead 2002) concept. The execution and nuances of democracy could, and definitely should, be discussed since there is also a common belief the democracy during the Fourth Republic was not ideal, that it was corrupted and marginalized a part of the population (chapter 6.2). Hence, there still is some common ground in the collective memory that has a role in the formation of values and collective identities. The interviewed media actors also mostly share the belief it is the normal citizens that suffer in the conflict and their human right of being informed and being heard is trampled upon. This implies there is also a common belief in human rights as something that is universal. However, again, it could and definitely should be discussed how these human rights ought to be executed and based on which values. Thus, the values attached to the conflict should be identified as done in this study in order to enable discussion or even debate them. Therefore, even though to find a final solution is out of the scope of this research, the contribution of this study is to increase (self-)awareness of the values attached to the signifiers behind the conflict. This awareness “enables one to explore the value of these beliefs and judgements, and the emotional commitments they involve, in the context of one’s life” (Hall 2005, 128).

The undisputed central figure of Chavismo, Hugo Chávez Frías, passed away in March 2013. His legacy, however, has not died. He still very much lives in the minds of the people but not only that, he is alive in media representations and images on the streets. That is why, in addition to economic reasons such as changes in crude oil prices, it is still important to understand the construction of Chavismo because, without it, it is impossible to understand the era of President Maduro and whatever comes after that. In addition to that it is important to acknowledge structural reasons for the conflict, such as clientelism as a form of power play and instrumentalization of the media for political purposes, items that had already prevailed before Chávez’s era but had taken on new forms after his presidency. These, of course, are not only characteristics of Venezuela but also in a broader sense for the whole of the continent and beyond.

Chavez’s presidency lasted for 14 years and Chavismo has prevailed for more or less two decades. This means there is a generation of Venezuelans for whom the situation forms a part of their identity, collective memory and values, and affects them personally in daily life no matter what their political orientation is. They do not personally know anything else. That is also the reason why the topic of this research will remain current.

References

- Acción Democrática. *Historia*. Accessed (5.8.2015) at <http://acciondemocratica.org.ve/adport/historia/>.
- Aguirre, J. M., A. Cañizales & Pellegrino, F. A. (1999). Los Medios de Comunicación Social en Venezuela. *Curso de Formación Sociopolítica* 26. Caracas: Fundación Centro Gumilla.
- Albertazzi, D. (2007). Addressing “the People”: A Comparative Study of the Lega Nord’s and Lega dei Ticinesi’s Political Rhetoric and Style of Propaganda. *Modern Italy* 12(3), 327–347.
- Alghasi, S. (2011). Understanding the Audience in a Multicultural Society. In E. Eide & K. Nikunen (Eds.), *Media in Motion. Cultural Complexity and Migration in the Nordic Region* (pp. 255-272). Burlington: Ashgate Publishing.
- Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Anderson, S. (2000). Loafing in the Garden of Knowledge: History TV and Popular memory. *Film and History* 30(1), 14-23.
- Arditi, B. (2010). Review Essay: Populism is Hegemony is Politics? On Ernesto Laclau’s On Populist Reason. *Constellations* 17(3), 488-497.
- Arenas, N. (2010). La Venezuela de Hugo Chávez: rentismo, populismo y democracia. *Nueva Sociedad* n 229.
- Arenas, N. (2006). El proyecto Chavista: entre el viejo y el nuevo populismo. *Cuestiones Políticas* N36.
- Arendt, H. (1963). *On Revolution*. New York: Viking Press.
- Arnold, J. R. & Samuels, D. J. (2011). Evidence from Public Opinion. In S. Levitsky & K. M. Roberts (Eds.), *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left* (pp.31-52). Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Atton, C. (2002). *Alternative Media*. London: Sage.
- Bajomi-Lázár, P. (2014). *Party Colonisation of the Media in Central and Eastern Europe*. Budapest: Central European University Press.
- Banks, M. (2001). *Visual Methods in Social Research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Barnhurst, K. G. & Steele, C. A. (1997). Image-Bite News: The Visual Coverage of Elections on U.S. Television, 1968-1992. *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 2(1), 40-58.
- Barrett, A. W. & Barrington, L. W (2005a). Is a Picture Worth a Thousand Words?: Newspaper Photographs and Voter Evaluations of Political Candidates. *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 2005 10(98), 98-113.
- Barrett, A. W. & Barrington, L. W (2005b) Bias in Newspaper Photograph Selection. *Political Research Quarterly* 58(4), 609-618.
- Bartley, K. & Briain, D. (dirs) (2003). *The Revolution Will not be Televised*. 74 min. Los Angeles: Vitagraph Films.
- BBC News (14.5.2013). Venezuelan opposition TV channel Globovision sold. Accessed (8.8.2015) at www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-22524101.
- BBC News (18.10.2011). Huge fine for Venezuelan opposition channel Globovision. Accessed (8.8.2015) at www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-15358834.
- BBC News (10.7.2010). Guillermo Zuloaga, critic of Venezuela president, in US. Accessed (8.8.2015) at www.bbc.com/news/10583624.

- Benhabib, S. (1996a). Introduction. The Democratic Moment and the Problem of Difference. In S. Benhabib (Ed.), *Democracy and Difference. Contesting the Boundaries of the Political* (pp. 3-18). Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Benhabib, S. (1996b). Toward a Deliberative Model of Democratic Legitimacy. In S. Benhabib (Ed.), *Democracy and Difference. Contesting the Boundaries of the Political* (67-94). Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Bernhagen, P. (2009). Democracy, business, and the economy. In C. W. Haerpfer, P. Bernhagen, R. F. Inglehart & C. Welzel (Eds.), *Democratization* (pp. 107-125). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Biorcio, R. (2003). The Lega Nord and the Italian Media System. In G. Mazzoleni, J. Stewart & B. Horsfield (Eds.), *The Media and Neo-Populism: a Contemporary Comparative Analysis* (pp. 71-94). Westport: Praeger Publishers.
- Birenbaum, G. & Villa, M. (2003). The Media and Neo-Populism in France. In G. Mazzoleni, J. Stewart & B. Horsfield (Eds.), *The Media and Neo-Populism: a Contemporary Comparative Analysis* (pp. 45-70). Westport: Praeger Publishers.
- Bisbal, M. (2009a). La comunicacion... Un debate sobre la democracia. In M. Bisbal (Ed.), *Hegemonia y Control Comunicacional* (pp. 7-22). Caracas: Editorial Alfa.
- Bisbal, M. (2009b). La comunicacion masiva como politica del gobierno de Hugo Chavez Frías. In M. Bisbal (Ed.), *Hegemonia y Control Comunicacional* (pp. 23-60). Caracas: Editorial Alfa.
- Boas, T. C. (2013). Mass Media and Politics in Latin America. In J. I. Domínguez & M. Shifter (Eds.), *Constructing Democratic Governance in Latin America*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press. Accessed at http://people.bu.edu/tboas/media_LA.pdf.
- Boas, T. C. (2010). Varieties of Electioneering. Success Contagion and Presidential Campaign in Latin America. *World Politics* 62(4), 636-675.
- Boomgarten, H. G. & Vliegenhart, R. (2007). Explaining the Rise of Anti-Immigrant parties: The Role of News Media Content. *Electoral Studies* 26(2), 404-417.
- Bos, L. & van der Brug, W. (2010). Public Images of Leaders of Anti-Immigration Parties: Perceptions of Legitimacy and Effectiveness. *Party Politics* 16(6), 777-799.
- Bos, L., van der Brug, W. & de Vreese, C. (2010). Media coverage of right-wing populist leaders. *Communications: the European journal of communication research* 35, 141-163.
- Bos, L., van der Brug, W. & de Vreese, C. (2011). How the Media Shape Perceptions of Right-Wing Populist Leaders. *Political Communication* 28(2), 182-206.
- Botía A. (2007). *Auge y crisis del Cuarto Poder*. Caracas: Debate.
- Botía, A. (2005). De la batalla mediática a la Guerra Ideológica. *Comunicación* 130, 30-35. Caracas: Centro Gumilla.
- Bowman, P. (2007). This disagreement is not one: The populisms of Laclau, Rancière and Ardití. *Social Semiotics* 17(4), 539-545.
- Brader, T. & Valentino, N. A. (2007). Identities, interests, and emotions: symbolic versus material wellspring of fear, anger, and enthusiasm. In W. R. Neuman, G. E. Marcus, A. N. Crigler, & M. MacKuen (Eds.), *The Affect Effect: Dynamics of Emotion in Political Thinking and Behavior* (pp. 180-2019). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Brading, R. (2013). *Populism in Venezuela*. New York: Routledge.
- Britto Garcia, L. (2006). *Venezuela: Investigación de unos Medios por encima de toda Sospecha*. Caracas: Ministerio de Comunicación e Información.
- Brockmeier, J. (2002). Remembering and Forgetting: Narrative as Cultural memory. *Culture & Psychology* 8(1), 15-43.
- Brüggemann, K. & Kasekamp, A. (2008). The Politics of History and the "Was of Monuments" in Estonia. *Nationalities Papers* 36(3), 425-448.

References

- Burke, K. (1946/1969). *A Grammar of Motives*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.
- Bush, R. (2012). Rhetoric, Psychoanalysis, and the Imaginary. *Cultural Studies* 26(2-3), 282-298.
- Cammack, P. (2000). The resurgence of populism in Latin America. *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 19(2), 149-161.
- Canache, D. (2012). The Meaning of Democracy in Venezuela: Citizen Perceptions and Structural Change. *Latin American Politics and Society* 54, 95-122.
- Canache, D. (2006). Urban Poor and Political Order. In J. L. McCoy & D. Muers (Eds.), *The Unraveling of Representative Democracy in Venezuela* (pp. 33-49). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Cañizales, A. (2014). The State in Pursuit of Hegemony over the Media: The Chávez Model. In M. A. Guerrero & M. Márques-Ramírez (Eds.), *Media Systems and Communication Policies in Latin America* (pp. 157-177). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cañizales, A. (1991). Los Medios de Comunicación Social. *Curso de Formación Sociopolítica* 26. Caracas: Centro Gumilla.
- Cañizález, A. & Lugo-Ocando, J. (2008). The media in Venezuela: the revolution was televised but no one was watching. In J. Lugo-Ocando (Ed.), *The Media in Latin America* (pp. 193-210). New York: McGraw-Hill/ Open University Press.
- Cannon, B. (2009). *Hugo Chavez and the Bolivarian Revolution: Populism and Democracy in a Globalised Age*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Cannon, B. (2008). Class/Race Polarisation in Venezuela and the Electoral Success of Hugo Chávez: A break with the Past or the Song Remains the Same? *Third World Quarterly* 29:4, 731-748.
- Canovan, M. (2005). *The People*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Castañeda, J. G. (2006). Latin America's Left Turn. *Foreign Affairs* 85(3), 28-43.
- Castells, M. (2009). *Communication Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The World Factbook. Venezuela. Accessed (25.8.2015) at www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ve.html.
- Chalaby, J. (1996). Journalism as an Anglo-American invention: A comparison of the development of French and Anglo-American journalism, 1830-92. *European Journal of Communication* 11(3), 303-326.
- Chandler, D. (1994). *Semiotics for Beginners Online*. Accessed (5.5.2014) at www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B.
- Chávez, D. & Goldfrank, B. (2004). *The Left in the City: Participatory Local Governments in Latin America*. London: Latin America Bureau.
- Chávez, H. (18.2.2013) Twitter. Accessed (2.9.2015) at <https://twitter.com/Chavezcandanga>.
- Christians, C. G., T. L. Glasser, D. McQuail, K. Nordenstreng & R. A. White. (2009). *Normative Theories of the Media. Journalism in democratic societies*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Cleary, M. (2006). Explaining the Left's Resurgence. *Journal of Democracy* 17(4), 35-49.
- Cohen, B. (1970). *The Press and Foreign Policy*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Cohler, A.M., Miller, B.C. & Stone, H.S. (1989). *Montesquieu: The Spirit of the Laws*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Colegio Nacional de Periodistas. Historia. Accessed (9.10.2015) at <http://ipsperiodista.org/2009/07/01/historia/>.
- Comisión Nacional de Telecomunicaciones (CONATEL). *Total de medios comunitarios habilitados*. Accessed (24.1.2013) at

- www.conatel.gob.ve/files/solicitudes/habilitaciones/Total_de_Medios_Comunitarios_Habilitados.pdf.
- Comité de Organización Política Electoral Independiente (COPEI). Historia. Accessed (5.8.2015) at www.partidocopei.com/historia/.
- Condor, S. (1996). Social identity and time. In W. P. Robinson (Ed.), *Social Groups and Identities. Developing the Legacy of Henri Tajfel* (pp. 285–315). Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Coppedge, M. (1994). *Strong Parties and Lamé Ducks: Presidential Partyarchy and Factionalism in Venezuela*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Corales, J. & Penfold-Becerra, M. (2011). *Dragon in the Tropics: Hugo Chavez and the Political Economy of Revolution in Venezuela*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Corneo, G. (2003). *Media capture and wealth concentration*. CEPR Discussion Paper no 4086. Accessed (9.10.2015) at http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=475103.
- Corrales O. & Sandoval, J. (2005). *Concentración del mercado de los medios, pluralismo y libertad de expression*. Working paper. Universidad de Chile. Available at http://www.uchile.cl/documentos/descargar-texto-completo-del-articulo-pdf-196kb_25646_o.pdf.
- Correa, C. (2006). Las Cadenas Oficiales 1999–2005: ¿Censura o Información? *Comunicación 134*, 16–21. Caracas: Centro Gumilla.
- Coser, L. A. (1992). The Revival of the Sociology. Case of Collective Memory. *Sociological Forum 7*(2), 365–373.
- Curran, J. (2002). *Media and Power*. London: Routledge.
- Curran, J. (1993). Rethinking the media as a public sphere. In P. Dahlgren & C. Sparks (Eds.), *Communication and citizenship* (pp. 27–58). London: Routledge.
- Dahl, R. A. (1989). *Democracy and its critics*. London: Yale University Press.
- Dahl, R. A. (1971). *Polyarchy. Participation and opposition*. London: Yale University Press.
- Dahlgren, P. (2009). *Media and Political Engagement. Citizens, Communication, and Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dalton, R. J. (2010). Ideology, partisanship, and democratic development. In L. LeDuc, R. G. Niemi & P. Norris (Eds.), *Comparing democracies 3* (pp. 143–164). Los Angeles: Sage.
- De Vreese, C. H., Peter J. & Sametko A. H. (2001). Framing Politics at the Launch of the Euro: A Cross-national Comparative Study of Frames in the News. *Political Communication 18*(2), 107–122.
- Deacon, D., Pickering, M., Golding, P. & Murdock, G. (2007). *Researching Communications. A Practical Guide to Methods in Media and Cultural Analysis*. London: Hodder Arnold.
- Delgado-Flores, C. (2006). La Gestión Comunicacional en la Administración Chávez. De la Dominación Mediática al Control Estatal. *Comunicación 134*, 10–14. Caracas: Centro Gumilla.
- Domke, D., McCoy, K., & Torres, M. (1999). News Media, Racial Perceptions, and Political Cognition. *Communication Research 26*(5), 570–607.
- Douzinas, C. (10.12.2008). The ‘end’ of human rights. *The Guardian*. Accessed (28.5.2015) at www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2008/dec/10/humanrights-unitednations.
- Dumitrescu, D. (2010). Know Me, Love me, Fear Me: The Anatomy of Candidate Poster Designs in the 2007 French Legislative Elections. *Political Communication, 27*(1), 20–43.
- Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (2014). *Social Panorama of Latin America 2014*. Santiago: United Nations. Accessed (11.8.2015) at

- http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/37627/S1420728_en.pdf?sequence=4.
- Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (2004). *Social Panorama of Latin America 2002-2003*. Santiago: United Nations. Accessed (11.8.2015) at http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/1218/So380562_en.pdf?sequence=1.
- Edy, J. A. (2014). Collective Memory in a Post-Broadcast World. In B. Zelizer & K. Tenenboim-Weinblatt (Eds.), *Journalism and Memory* (pp. 66-79). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Eide, E. & Nikunen, K. (2011). Introduction: Change of Climate. In E. Eide & K. Nikunen (Eds.), *Media in Motion* (pp. 1-18). Cultural Complexity and Migration in the Nordic Region. Barlington: Ashgate Publishing.
- El Nacional. Archivo. Accessed (20.8.2015) at www.el-nacional.com/archivo/.
- El Universal (12.10.2013). Gobierno conmemora el Día de la Resistencia Indígena. Accessed (15.8.2015) at www.eluniversal.com/nacional-y-politica/131012/gobierno-conmemora-el-dia-de-la-resistencia-indigena.
- Ellner, S. (2014, Dec 24). *After Chavez: The Maduro Government and the 'Economic War' in Venezuela*. Accessed (14.8.2015) at www.newleftproject.org/index.php/site/article_comments/after_chavez_the_maduro_government_and_the_economic_war_in_venezuela1.
- Ellner, S. (2008). *Rethinking Venezuelan Politics. Class, Conflict, and the Chavez Phenomenon*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Ellner, S. (2006). Las estrategias desde arriba y desde abajo del movimiento de Hugo Chávez. *Cuadernos del CENDES* 62, 73-93.
- Ellner, S. (2001). The Radical Potential of Chavismo in Venezuela. The First Year and a Half in Power. *Latin American perspectives* 120(28) No.5, 5-32.
- Ellner, S. (1993). *Organized Labor in Venezuela 1958-1991. Behavior and Concerns in a Democratic Setting*. Wilmington, Delaware: A Scholarly Resources Inc.
- Encyclopædia Britannica. Clientelism. Accessed (24.1.2016) at <http://global.britannica.com/topic/clientelism>.
- Entman, R. M. (2007). Framing Bias: Media in the Distribution of Power. *Journal of Communication* 57(1), 163-173.
- Entman, R.M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication* 43(4), 51-58.
- Entman, R.M. (1991). Framing U.S. coverage of international news: Contrasts in narratives of the KAL and Iran air incidents. *Journal of Communication* 41(4), 6-27.
- Espacio Publico. Informe situación de la Libertad de Expresión 2013-3.pdf. Accessed (4.12.2015) at <http://espaciopublico.org/>.
- Foucault, M. (2006). *History of madness*. London: Routledge.
- Foucault, M. (1998). *Seksuaalisuuden historia. Tiedontahto, nautintojen käyttö, huoli itsestä*. Helsinki: Gaudeamus.
- Foweraker, J., T. Landman & N. Harvey (2003). *Governing Latin America*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fox, E. & Waisbord, S. (2002a). Introduction. In E. Fox & S. Waisbord (Eds.), *Latin Politics, Global Media* (pp. ix-xxii). Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Fox, E. & Waisbord, S. (2002b) Latin Politics, Global Media. In E. Fox & S. Waisbord (Eds.), *Latin Politics, Global Media* (pp. 1-21). Austin: University of Texas Press.

- Frank, T. (2004). *What's the Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- Freedman, D. (2015). Paradigms of Media Power. *Communication, Culture & Critique* 8(2), 273-289.
- Freedman, D. (2014). *The Contradictions of Media Power*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Freedom House. Freedom in the world 2012. Venezuela. Accessed (4.12.2015) at <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2012/venezuela>.
- Freedom House. Freedom in the world 1999. Venezuela. Accessed (4.12.2015) at <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/1999/venezuela>.
- Freire, Paulo (1972). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. London: Sheed and Ward.
- Gallino, L. & Niemeyer R. (28.9.2003). Guns & Roses en Caracas, Chávez a punta de pistola. *Aporrea.org*. Accessed (24.8.2015) at <http://www.aporrea.org/actualidad/a4938.html>.
- Galtung, J. (1999). 'State, Capital, and the Civil Society: The Problem of Communication'. In R. Vincent, K. Nordenstreng and M. Traber (Eds.), *Towards Equity in Global Communication: MacBride Update* (pp. 3-21). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- García Canclini, N. (2005). *Hybrid cultures. Strategies for entering and leaving modernity*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- García-Guadilla, M. (2008). La Praxis de los Consejos Comunes en Venezuela: ¿Poder Popular o Instancia Clientelar? *Revista Venezolana de Economía y Ciencias Sociales* 14(1), 125-151.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures. Selected essays*. New York: Basic Books.
- Georgiou, M. (2006). *Diaspora, Identity and the Media: Diasporic Transnationalism and Mediated Spatialities*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Gitlin, T. (1980). *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in Making & Unmaking the New Left*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Glynos, J. & Stavrakakis, Y. (2004). Encounters of the Real Kind: sussing out the limits of Laclau's embrace of Lacan. In S. Critchley & O. Marchart (Eds.), *Laclau: A Critical Reader* (pp. 201-216). London: Routledge.
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame Analysis. An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Goldfrank, B. (2011). The Left and Participatory democracy. Brazil, Uruguay, and Venezuela. In S. Levitsky & K. M. Roberts (Eds.), *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left* (pp. 162-183). Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- González Ginestet, T. (2015). TeleSUR in the Argentinean Kirchner's time. Presentation in Media & Governance in Latin America conference in the University of Sheffield 25.-26.6.2015.
- González Liendo, A. (22.11.2012). A 60 Años de la Televisión en Venezuela: el Canal 5 no Tuvo Dolientes y CAP lo Cerró. *Aporrea.org*. Accessed (24.8.2015) at www.aporrea.org/medios/a154730.html.
- Gott, R. (2005). *Hugo Chavez and the Bolivarian Revolution*. London: Verso.
- Gramsci, A. (1985). *Selections from Cultural Writings*. London: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Gramsci, A. (1982). *Vankilavihkot 2. Mennyttyä ja nykyistä, Tämän päivän ruhtinas, Valtio, Amerikanismi ja fordismi*. Helsinki: Kansankulttuuri Oy.
- Gramsci, A. (1979). *Vankilavihkot. Valikoima* (Quaderni del carcere Torino 1975). Helsinki: Kansankulttuuri Oy.
- Guerrero, M.A. (2014). The 'Captured Liberal' Model of Media Systems in Latin America. In M.A. Guerrero & M. Márquez-Ramírez (Eds.), *Media Systems and Communication Policies in Latin America* (pp. 43-65). New York: The Palmgrave Macmillan.

- Guerrero M.A. & Márquez-Ramírez, M. (Eds.) (2014). *Media Systems and Communication Policies in Latin America*. New York: The Palmgrave Macmillan.
- Gumucio Dagron, A. (2007). Call Me Impure: Myths and Paradigms of Participatory Communication. In L. K. Fuller (Ed.), *Community Media. International Perspectives* (pp. 197-207). New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Gunson, P. (2004). "Director's cut: did an acclaimed documentary about the 2002 coup in Venezuela tell the whole story? *Columbia Journalism review* 43(1), 59-61.
- Hall, C. (2005). *The Trouble with Passion: Political Theory Beyond the Reign of Reason*. New York: Routledge.
- Hall, S. (1997) Introduction. In S. Hall (Ed.), *Representations. Cultural representations and signifying practices* (pp. 13-74). London: Sage.
- Hall, S. (1988). *The Hard Road to Renewal*. London: Verso.
- Hall, S. (1987). Gramsci And Us. *Marxism Today*, June 1987, 16-21.
- Hallin, D. & Mancini, P. (2004). *Comparing media Systems. Three Models of Media and Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hallin, D.C. & Papathanassopoulos, S. (2002). Political Clientelism and the Media: Southern Europe and Latin America in Comparative Perspective. *Media, Culture & Society*, 24(2), 175-195.
- Hamecker, M. (2003). *Venezuela: Una Revolución Sui Géneris*. Accessed (27.10.2007) at www.rebellion.org/docs/8959.pdf.
- Hamelink, C. (1994). *The Politics of World Communication: A Human Rights Perspective*. London: Sage.
- Haug, W. F. (1987). *Commodity Aesthetics, Ideology and Culture*. New York: International General.
- Hawkins, K. A. (2010). *Venezuela's Chavismo and Populism in Comparative Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hawkins, K. A. & Hansen, D. R. (2006). Dependent Civil Society: The Círculos Bolivarianos in Venezuela. *Latin American Research Review* 41(1), 102-132.
- Held, D. (1996). *Models of Democracy*. Second edition. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Held, D. (1989). *Political Theory and the Modern State*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hellinger, D. (2005). When 'No' Means 'Yes to Revolution': Electoral Politics in Bolivarian Venezuela. *Latin American Perspectives* 32(3), 8-32.
- Herkman, J. (2015). Pelkkää retoriikkaa? Populismien kehukset Helsingin Sanomissa ja Ilta-Sanomissa vuoden 2011 eduskuntavaalien yhteydessä. *Media & viestintä* 38(2), 74-89.
- Herrera Salas, J. M. (2007). The Political Economy of Racism in Venezuela. In S. Ellner & M. Tinker Salas (Eds.), *Venezuela. Hugo Chávez and the Decline of an "Exceptional Democracy"* (pp. 99-118). Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Horsfield B. & Stewart, J. (2003). One Nation and the Australian Media. In G. Mazzoleni, J. Stewart & B. Horsfield (Eds.), *The Media and Neo-Populism. A Contemporary Comparative Analysis* (pp. 125-152). Westport, Conn: Praeger.
- Houwen, T. (2011). The non-European roots of the concept of populism. Working Paper No 120. *Sussex European Institute*.
- Instituto de Previsión Social del Periodista. Historia. Accessed (9.10.2015) at <http://ipsperiodista.org/2009/07/01/historia/>.
- Instituto Prensa y Sociedad. Alertas. Violaciones a la Libertad de Prensa en Venezuela. Accessed (4.12.2015) at <http://ipysvenezuela.org/alertas/>.
- Iyengar, S. & Hahn, K. (2009). Red Media, Blue Media: Evidence of Ideological Selectivity in Media Use. *Journal of Communication* 59(1), 19-39.

- Jagers, J. & Walgrave, S. (2007). Populism as Political Communication Style: An Empirical Study of Political Parties' Discourse in Belgium. *European Journal of Political Research* 46(3), 319–345.
- Jetten, J. & Hutchison, P. (2011). When Groups Have a lot to Lose: Historical Continuity Enhances Resistance to a Merger. *European Journal of Social Psychology* 41(3), 335–343.
- Jones, M. (2014). Chantal Mouffe's Agonistic Project: Passion and Participation. *Parallax* 20(2), 14–30.
- Kakkuri-Knuuttila, M-L. & Halonen, I. (1999). Argumenttianalyysi ja hyvän argumentin ehdot. In M-L Kakkuri-Knuuttila (Ed.), *Argumentti ja kritiikki. Lukemisen, keskustelun ja vakuuttamisen taidot* (pp. 60–113). Helsinki: Gaudeamus.
- Kansteiner, W. (2002). Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies. *History and Theory* 41, 179–197.
- Keane, J. (1988). *Democracy and Civil Society*. London: Verso.
- Kinder, D. (1998). Opinion and action in the realm of politics. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *The Handbook of Social Psychology* (pp. 778–867). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Kirchheimer, O. (1990). The Catch-All Party. In P. Mair (Ed.), *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kitzberger, P. (2014). Demands for Media Democratization and the Latin American “New Left”. Presentation in Media & Governance in Latin America conference in the University of Sheffield, 13–14.5.2014.
- Kitzberger, P. (2012). The media in Latin America's Leftist Governments. *Journal of politics in Latin America* 4(3), 123–139.
- Klimkiewicz, B. (2010). Introduction: Structural media pluralism. *International Journal of Communication* 4, 906–913.
- Klimkiewicz, B. (2009). Is the clash of rationalities leading nowhere? In A. Czepek, M. Hellwig & E. Nowak (Eds.), *Press freedom and pluralism in Europe. Concept and conditions* (pp. 45–74). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Koivisto, J. & Pietilä V. (1996/1997). Ideological Powers and Resistance: The Contribution of W. F. Haug and Projekt Ideologie-Theorie. *Rethinking Marxism* 9(4), 40–59.
- Koivisto, J. & Uusitupa T. (1989). Antonio Gramsci. In J. Kanerva (Ed.), *Politiikan teorian moderneja klassikkoja* (pp. 59–82). Helsinki: Gaudeamus.
- Kozloff, N. (15.10.2005). Hugo Chávez and the Politics of Race. *Venezuela analysis*. Accessed (10.8.2015) at <http://venezuelanalysis.com/analysis/1414>.
- Kress, G. & van Leeuwen, T. (1996). *Reading Images. The Grammar of Visual Design*. London: Routledge.
- Kunelius, R., Noppari, E. & Reunanen, E. (2010). *Media vallan verkoissa*. Tampere: Tampereen yliopistopaino Oy.
- La Causa Radical. Alfredo Maneiro. Accessed (10.8.2015) at <http://lacauser.org.ve/alfredo-maneiro/>.
- Laclau, E. (2012). Reply. *Cultural Studies* 26(2–3), 391–415.
- Laclau, E. (2005a). *On Populist Reason*. London: Verso.
- Laclau, E. (2005b). Populism: What's in a name? In F. Panizza (Ed.), *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy* (pp. 32–49). London: Verso.
- Laclau, E. & Mouffe, C. (1985/2001). *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a radical democratic politics*. London: Verso.
- Lander, E. (2009). El Estado u las Tensiones de la Participación Popular en Venezuela. *Documentación Social* 152, 55–75.

- Lander, E. (2005). Venezuelan Social Conflict in a Global Context. *Latin American Perspectives* 32(4), 20-38.
- Landsberg, A. (2009). Memory, Empathy, and the Politics of Identification. *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 22, 221-229.
- Lawson, C. & McCann, J. (2005). Television Coverage, Media Effects, and Mexico's 2000 Elections. *British Journal of Political Science* 35(1), 1-30.
- Levitsky, S. & Roberts, K. M. (2011). Introduction: Latin America's "Left Turn": A Framework for Analysis. In S. Levitsky & K. M. Roberts (Eds.), *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left* (pp. 1-28). Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Liu, J. H. & Hilton, D. J. (2005). How the Past Weighs on the Present: Social Representations of History and Their Role in Identity Politics. *British Journal of Social Psychology* 44(4), 537-556.
- López Maya, M. (2011). Venezuela: Hugo Chávez and the Populist Left. In S. Levitsky & K. M. Roberts (Eds.), *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left* (pp. 213-238). Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- López Maya, M. (2003). Hugo Chávez Frías: His Movement and His Presidency. In S. Ellner & D. Hellinger (Eds.), *Venezuelan Politics in the Chávez Era: Class, Polarization, and Conflict* (pp. 73-91). Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- López Maya, M. & Lander, L. E. (2007). Venezuela: Las Elecciones Presidenciales de 2006: Hacia el Socialismo del Siglo XXI? *Cuadernos del CENDES* 24(64), 1-21.
- López Maya, M., Smilde, D. & Stephany, K. (2002). *Protesta y cultura en Venezuela: los marcos de acción colectiva en 1999*. Buenos Aires: CLACSO Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales.
- Loveless, M. (2008). Media dependency: Mass media as sources of information in the democratizing countries of Central and Eastern Europe. *Democratization* 15(1), 162-183.
- Luna, J. P. & Filgueira, F. (2009). The Left Turns as multiple Paradigmatic Crises. *Third World Quarterly* 30(2), 371-395.
- Lupu, N. (2010). Who Votes for "Chavismo"? Class Voting in Hugo Chávez's Venezuela. *Latin American Research Review* 45(1), 7-32.
- Machin, D. & van Leeuwen, T. (2007). *Global Media Discourse. A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Madriz, M. F. (2011). Community Media (Venezuela). In J. D. H. Downing (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Social Movement Media* (pp. 112-115). London: Sage.
- Magazine digital (29.3.2013). La verdadera Historia de Chacumbele. Accessed (1.4.2013) at <http://www.magazine.com.ve/la-verdadera-historia-de-chacumbele/>.
- Mainsah, H. (2011). Transcending the National Imagery: Digital Online Media and the Transnational Networks of Ethnic Minority Youth in Norway. In E. Eide & K. Nikunen (Eds.), *Media in Motion. Cultural Complexity and Migration in the Nordic Region* (pp. 201-218). Burlington: Ashgate Publishing.
- Mainwaring, S. & Scully, T. R. (1995). Conclusion: Parties and Democracy in Latin America – Different Patterns, Common Challenges. In S. Mainwaring & T. Scully (Eds.), *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America* (pp. 459-476). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Mancini, P. (2012). Instrumentalization of the media vs. Political parallelism. *Chinese Journal of Communication* 5(3), 262-280.
- Mancini, P. (2000). Political Complexity and Alternative Models of Journalism. In J. Curran & M. Park (Eds.), *De-Westernizing Media Studies* (pp. 265-278). London: Routledge.
- Mandell, L. M. & Shaw, D. L. (1973). Judging people in the news – unconsciously: Effect of camera angle and bodily activity. *Journal of Broadcasting* 17(3), 353-362.

- Maoz, I. (2012). The Face of the Enemy: the Effect of Press-Reported Visual Information Regarding the Facial Features of Opponent Politicians on Support for Peace. *Political Communication* 29(3), 243-256.
- Marcinkowski, F. (2014). Mediatisation of Politics: Reflections on the State of the Concept. *Javnost – The Public* 21(2), 5-22.
- Martín, A. (2013). *La terrible década de los 60. Memorias II*. Caracas: Editorial libros Marcados.
- Martín-Barbero, J. (1993). *Communication, Culture and hegemony. From the media to mediations*. London: Sage.
- Matos, C. (2012). *Media and Politics in Latin America: Globalization, democracy and identity*. London: I.B.Tauris.
- Mayobre, J. A. (2002). Venezuela and the Media: The New Paradigm. In E. Fox & S. Waisbord (Eds.), *Latin Politics, Global Media* (pp. 176-186). Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Mazzoleni, G. (2008). Populism and the Media. In D. Albertazzi & D. McDonnell (Eds.), *Twenty-First Century Populism. The spectre of Western European Democracy* (pp. 49-66). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mazzoleni, G. (2003). The Media and the Growth of Neo-Populism in Contemporary Democracies. In G. Mazzoleni, J. Stewart & B. Horsfield (Eds.), *The Media and Neo-Populism: A Contemporary Comparative Analysis* (pp. 1-20). Westport: Praeger Publishers.
- McQuail, D. (2000). *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory*. London: Sage.
- Mesa de la Unidad Democrática (MUD). Accessed (13.8.2015) at www.unidadvenezuela.org/acerca-de/
- Meza, A. (5.7.2014). La venta de un diario venezolano aviva el debate sobre la propiedad de los medios. *El país*. Accessed (8.8.2014) at http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2014/07/05/actualidad/1404587135_949473.html.
- Meza, A. & La Fuente, S. (2004). *El acertijo de abril. Relato periodístico de la breve caída de Hugo Chávez*. Caracas: Debate.
- Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Comunicación y la Información (MINCI). Bulletin of Ministry of Information and Communication 26.5.2007.
- Ministerio del Poder Popular para las Telecomunicaciones y Informática (MPPTI) (2007, May). Políticas de democratización de la comunicación en Venezuela. Briefing organized by the Ministry in Caracas.
- Mols, F. & Jetten, J. (2014). No guts, no glory: How framing the collective past paves the way for anti-immigrant sentiments. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 43A, 74-86.
- Monitoreo Ciudadano. Cadenas nacionales en Venezuela. Accessed (25.8.2015) at <http://monitoreociudadano.org/yomonitorio/2014/06/cadenas-nacionales-en-venezuela/>
- Mouffe, C. (2014). By Way of a Postscript. *Parallax* 20(2), 149-157.
- Mouffe, C. (2013). *Agonistics. Thinking the World Politically*. London: Verso.
- Mouffe, C. (2005a). *On the Political*. London: Routledge.
- Mouffe, C. (2005b). The 'End of Politics' and the Challenge of Right-wing Populism. In F. Panizza (Ed.), *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy* (pp. 50-71). London: Verso.
- Mouffe, C. (2005c). *The Return of the Political*. London: Verso.
- Mouffe, C. (2000). *Democratic Paradox*. London: Verso.

- Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MAS). Historia. Accessed (10.8.2015) at <http://www.masvenezuela.com.ve/blog/historia/>.
- Mungiu-Pippidi, A. (2008). How media and politics shape each other in the new Europe. In K. Jakubowicz & M. Sukosd (Eds.), *Finding the right place on the map* (pp. 87-101). Bristol: Intellect.
- Mwangi, S. C. (2001). International Public Journalism. *Kettering Foundation Connections* 12(1), 23-27.
- Navia, P. & Walker I. (2010). Political Institutions, Populism, and democracy in Latin America. In S. Mainwaring & T. R. Scully (Eds.), *Democratic Governance in Latin America* (pp. 245-265). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Neuman, W. (14.7.2014). Sale of Paper in Venezuela Raises Fear on Freedom. *New York Times*. Accessed (8.8.2014) at www.nytimes.com/2014/07/15/world/americas/sale-of-paper-in-venezuela-raises-fears-on-freedom.html?_r=0.
- Niemi, M. K. (2012). Timo Soini perussuomalaisen identiteetin isäntänä. In V. Pernaa & E. Railo (Eds.), *Jytky. Eduskuntavaalien 2011 mediajulkisuus* (pp. 324-344). Turku: Kirja-Aurora.
- Nieminen, H. (2000). *Hegemony and the Public Sphere*. Turku: University of Turku.
- Nikunen, K. (2010). Online Among Us. Experiences of virtuality in everyday life. *Nordicom Information* 32(2-3), 75-82.
- Nordenstreng, K. (2009). Media and society. A Discussion Paper in Community Media and New Technology- Where next? The Intensive Course Organized by Swedish School of Social Science, June 7-13. Accessed (25.5. 2015) at <http://sockom.helsinki.fi/commedia/Nordenstreng%20Media%20and%20Society.pdf>.
- Nordenstreng, K. (1997). The Citizen Moves from the Audience to the Arena. *Nordicom Review*, 2/1997, 13-20.
- O'Donnell, G. (1994). Delegative Democracy. *Journal of Democracy* 5(1), 55-69.
- O'Donnell, M. (2007). *Propaganda K: Una maquinaria de promoción con dinero del Estado*. Buenos Aires: Planeta.
- Oropeza Z. A. (2009). Comunicación como política de gobierno vs. comunicación como política de revolución. In M. Bisbal (Ed.), *Hegemonia y Control Comunicacional* (pp. 61-84). Caracas: Editorial Alfa.
- O'Sullivan-Ryan, J. & Kaplún, M. (1978). *Communication methods to promote grass-roots participation. A Summary of Research Findings from Latin America, and an Annotated bibliography*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Panbianco, A. (1988). *Political Parties: Organization and Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Panizza, F. (2005). Introduction: Populism and the Mirror of Democracy. In F. Panizza (Ed.), *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy* (pp. 1-31). London: Verso.
- Pappas, T. (2008). Political Leadership and the Emergence of Radical Mass Movements in Democracy. *Comparative Political Studies* 41(8), 1117-1140.
- Partido Comunista de Venezuela. Accessed (10.8.2015) at <https://prensapcv.wordpress.com/2014/07/25/79-anos-de-la-admision-del-pcv-a-la-internacional-comunista/#more-7332>.
- Pelczynski, Z. A. (Ed.) (1984). *The State and Civil Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pellegrino, F.A. (2004). Breve historia económica de los medios venezolanos: De la aceptación social a la concentración de capital. *Comunicación* 124, 4-9. Caracas: Centro Gumilla.
- Perelló, G. & Biglieri, P. (2012). On the Debate around Immanence and Transcendence. Multitude or the people. *Cultural Studies* 26(2-3), 319-329.

- Pérez-Liñán, A. (2002). Television news and political partisanship in Latin America. *Political Research Quarterly* 55(3), 571-588.
- Petkoff, T. (2005). Las Dos Izquierdas. *Nueva Sociedad* 197, 114-128.
- Petrova, M. (2008). Inequality and media capture. *Journal of Public Economics* 92(1-2), 183-212.
- Poulantzas, N. (1978/1980). *State, Power, Socialism*. London: Verso.
- Przeworski, A. (1991). *Democracy and the market: Political and economic reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Quiñones, R. (2012). Situación para 2011. Medios y política en Venezuela. *Comunicación* 158, 28-35. Caracas: Centro Gumilla.
- Rehmann, J. (2013). *Theories of Ideologies. The powers of alienation and subjection*. Leiden: Brill.
- Reporters without Borders. Press freedom index 2011/2012. Accessed (4.12.2015) at http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=classement&id_rubrique=1043.
- Reporters without Borders. Press freedom index 2002. Accessed (4.12.2015) at http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=classement&id_rubrique=297.
- Roberts, K. (2008). The Mobilization of Opposition to Economic Liberalization. *Annual Review of Political Science* 11, 327-349.
- Roberts, K. (2003a). Social Correlates of Party System Demise and Populist Resurgence in Venezuela. *Latin American Politics and Society* 45(3), 35-57.
- Roberts, K. (2003b). Social Polarization and the Populist Resurgence in Venezuela. In S. Ellner & D. Hellinger (Eds.), *Venezuelan Politics in the Chávez Era: Class, Polarization, and Conflict* (pp. 55-72). Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- Roberts, K. (1995). Neoliberalism and the Transformation of Populism in Latin America: The Peruvian Case. *World Politics* 48(1), 82-116.
- Rodriguez, C. (2011). *Citizens' media against armed conflict. Distrupting violence in Colombia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Rosenberg, S. W. & McCafferty, P. (1987). The Image and the vote: Manipulating voters' preferences. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 51, 31-47.
- Rosenberg, S. W., Kahn, S. & Tran, T. (1991). Creating a Political Image: Shaping Appearance and Manipulating the Vote. *Political Behavior* 13(4), 345-367.
- Sakki, I. & Pettersson K. (2015). Discursive Construction of Otherness in Populist Radical Right Political Blogs. *European Journal of Social Psychology*. DOI: 10.1002/ejsp.2142.
- Salojärvi, V. (2014). "Here Came the People to Stay Forever" - Constructing the People in Venezuelan Populist Newspapers. Conference paper in Media & Governance in Latin America. The University of Sheffield, 13-14 May 2014.
- Salojärvi, V. (2013). Civil society and the media in Venezuela. How citizen activists experience the "media war". Conference paper in Development Research Day 8.2.2013, University of Helsinki.
- Salojärvi, V. (2008). *Venezuelan media murroksessa. Keväällä 2007 Venezuelassa käydyin mediakeskustelun kehystäminen*. Master's thesis for the Department of Development Studies, University of Helsinki.
- Samet, R. (2013). The Photographer's Body: Populism Polarization, and the Uses of Victimhood in Venezuela. *American Ethnologist* 40(3), 525-539.
- Sartori, G. (1989). Video-Power. *Government and Opposition* 24, 39-53.
- Scheufele, D. A. & Tewksbury, D. (2007). Framing Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects Models. *Journal of Communication* 57(1), 9-20.
- Schmitt-Beck, R. & Voltmer, K. (2007). The mass media in third-wave democracies: Gravediggers or seedsmen of democratic consolidation? In R. Gunther, J. R. Montero &

- H-J. Puhle (Eds.), *Democracy, Intermediation, and Voting on Four Continents* (pp. 75-134). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Schumpeter, J.A. (1976). *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*. London: Routledge.
- Seixas, P. (2004). Introduction. In P. Seixas (Ed.), *Theorizing Historical Consciousness* (pp. 3-20). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Semetko, H. A., & Valkenburg, P. M. (2000). Framing European politics: A content analysis of press and television news. *Journal of Communication* 50(2), 93-109.
- Seymore-Ure, C. (1974). *The political impact of mass media*. London: Sage.
- Showstack Sassoon, A. (1980). Gramsci: A News Concept of Politics and the Expansion of Democracy. In A. Hunt (Ed.), *Marxism and Democracy* (pp. 81-100). London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Prensa. Nuestra historia. Accessed (9.10.2015) at www.sntp.com.ve/nosotros.php
- Sjöberg, U. & Rydin, I. (2011). Everyday Mediated Practices of Citizenship: Struggling with a New Language and Culture Through Media. In E. Eide & K. Nikunen (Eds.), *Media in Motion. Cultural Complexity and Migration in the Nordic Region* (pp. 237-254). Barlington: Ashgate Publishing.
- Smeeke, A., Verkuyten, M. & Poppe, E. (2011). Mobilising opposition towards Muslim immigrants: National identification and the representation of national history. *British Journal of Social Psychology* 50(2), 265-280.
- Sonwalkar, P. (2005). Banal journalism: the centrality of the 'us-them' binary in news discourse. In S. Allan (Ed.), *Journalism: Critical issues* (pp. 261-273). Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Sreberny, A. (1999). *Include me in. Rethinking ethnicity in television: audience and production perspectives*. London: Broadcasting Standards Commission in conjunction with the Independent Television Commission.
- Stanley, B. (2008). The thin ideology of populism. *Journal of Political Ideologies* 13(1), 95-110.
- Stewart, J., Mazzoleni, G. & Horsfield, B. (2003). Conclusion. Power to the Media Managers. In G. Mazzoleni, J. Stewart & B. Horsfield (Eds.), *The Media and Neo-Populism. A Contemporary Comparative Analysis* (pp. 217-239). Westport: Praeger Publishers.
- Stokes, S. C. (2009). *Globalization and the Left in Latin America*. Unpublished manuscript, Yale University.
- Stroud, N. J. (2011). *Niche news. The Politics of News Choice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sylvia, R. D. & Danopoulos, C. P. (2003). The Chávez Phenomenon: Political Change in Venezuela. *Third World Quarterly* 24(1), 63-76.
- Taggart, P. (2000). *Populism*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Tambakaki, P. (2014). The Task of Agonism and Agonism to the Task: Introducing 'Chantal Mouffe: Agonism and the Politics of Passion'. *Parallax* 20(2), 1-13.
- Tamm, M. (2008). History as Cultural Memory: Mnemohistory and the Construction of the Estonian Nation. *Journal of Baltic Studies* 39(4), 499-516.
- Tanner Hawkins, E. (2003). Conflict and the Mass Media Chávez's Venezuela. Accessed (27.10.2007) at <http://lasa.international.pitt.edu/Lasa2003/TannerHawkinsEliza.pdf>.
- Torre, C. de la (2010). *Populist Seduction in Latin America. The Ecuadorian Experience*. Ohio: Ohio University Press.
- Tuchman, G. (1978). *Making News*. New York: The Free Press.

- Últimas Noticias. Claves de la ultima memoria y cuenta de Chávez. Accessed (2.9.2015) at www.ultimasnoticias.com.ve/noticias/actualidad/politica/claves-de-la-ultima-memoria-y-cuenta-de-Chávez.aspx.
- Últimas Noticias. La marca. Accessed (20.8.2015) at www.ultimasnoticias.com.ve/lamarca.aspx.
- UNICEF. At a glance: Venezuela, The Bolivarian Republic of: Statistics. Accessed (24.8.2015) at www.unicef.org/infobycountry/venezuela_statistics.html.
- Valecillos Vázquez, C. A. (2014). *La construcción de representaciones sociales en los discursos anuales de los presidentes venezolanos: Betancourt, Caldera, Pérez y Chávez*. Doctoral thesis. Universidad Complutense.
- Valencia Ramírez, C. (2005). Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution: Who Are the Chavistas? *Latin American Perspectives* 32(3), 79-97.
- Valencia Ramírez, C. (2007). Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution: Who Are the Chavistas?. In S. Ellner & M. Tinker Salas (Eds.), *Venezuela. Hugo Chávez and the Decline of an "Exceptional Democracy"* (pp. 121-139). Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Valkenburg, P. M., Semetko, H. A., & de Vreese, C. H. (1999). The effects of news frames on readers' thoughts and recall. *Communication Research* 26(5), 550-569.
- van Dalen, A. (2012). Structural Bias in Cross-National Perspective. How Political Systems and Journalism Cultures Influence Government Dominance in the News. *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 17(1), 32-55.
- van der Brug, W. & Mughan, A. (2007). Charisma, Leader Effects and Support for Right-Wing Populist Parties. *Party Politics* 13, 29-51.
- Vásquez S. Á. (2014). El Ministerio de Comunicación utiliza 65 % de sus recursos en propaganda oficial. *Comunicación* 165, 22-24. Caracas: Centro Gumilla.
- Villegas Poljak, E. (2009). *Abril golpe adentro*. Caracas: Editorial Galac.
- Voltmer, K. (2013). *The Media in Transitional Democracies*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Venezolana de Televisión (VTV) (2013). Podemos manifiesta unidad con Chavez y Saluda ratificacion de Diosdado Cabello en AN. Accessed 13.8.2015) at www.vtv.gob.ve/articulos/2013/01/06/podemos-manifiesta-unidad-con-chavez-y-saluda-ratificacion-de-diosdado-cabello-en-an-1951.html.
- Venezolana de Televisión (VTV). Resena historica. Accessed (24.8.2015) at www.vtv.gob.ve/el-canal/resena-historica.
- Väliaverronen, E. (1996). *Ympäristöuhkan anatomia*. Jyväskylä: Vastapaino.
- Waisbord, S. (2014). Latin American Media and the Limitations of the Media 'Globalization' Paradigm. In M. A. Guerrero & M. Márques-Ramirez (Eds.), *Media Systems and Communication Policies in Latin America* (pp. 24-42). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Waisbord, S. (2013). Democracy, journalism, and Latin American populism. *Journalism* 14(4), 504-521.
- Waisbord, S. (2011). Between Support and Confrontation: Civil Society, Media Reform, and Populism in Latin America. *Communication, Culture & Critique* 4, 97-117.
- Waisbord, S. (2009). Periodismo y democracia donde no hay estado. In A. Cañizalez (Ed.), *Tiempos de cambio. Política y Comunicación en America Latina* (pp. 203-226). Caracas: Universidad Catolica Andres Bello.
- Waisbord, S. (2000). Media in South America. Between the rock of the state and the hard place of the market. In J. Curran and M.J. Park (Eds.), *De-westernizing media studies* (pp. 50-63). London: Routledge.
- Walzer, M. (2002). Passion and politics. *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 28(6), 617-633.

References

- Ward, I. (1993). Media Intrusion and the Changing Nature of the Established Parties in Austria and Canada. *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 26(3), 477-506.
- Weisbrot, M. & Ruttenberg, T. (14.10.2010). Television in Venezuela: Who Dominates the Media? Venezuela analysis. Accessed (9.10.2015) at <http://venezuelanalysis.com/analysis/5860>.
- Wertsch, J.V. (1997). Narrative Tools of History and Identity. *Culture & Psychology* 3(1), 5-20.
- Wertsch, J.V. (2008). Collective Memory and Narrative Templates. *Social Research* 75(1), 133-156.
- Western, D. (2007). *The Political Brain: The Role of Emotion in Deciding the Fate of the Nation*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Weyland, K. (2011). The Left and the Market Model. In S. Levitsky & K. M. Roberts (Eds.), *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left* (pp. 71-92). Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Weyland, K. (2004). Neoliberalism and Democracy in Latin America: A Mixed Record. *Latin American Politics and Society* 46(1), 135-157.
- Weyland, K. (1999). Neoliberal Populism in Latin America and Eastern Europe. *Comparative Politics* 31(4), 379-401.
- Weyland, K. (1998). The Politics of Corruption in Latin America. *Journal of Democracy* 9(2), 108-121.
- Whitehead, L. (2010). Alternative Models of Democracy in Latin America. *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 17(1), 75-87.
- Whitehead, L. (2002). *Democratization. Theory and experience*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Williams, R. (1982/1962). *Communications*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Williams, R. (1976/1958). *Culture and Society 1780-1950*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Wright, T. (2011). Press Photography and Visual Rhetoric. In E. Margolis & L. Pauwels (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook Visual Research Methods* (pp. 317-337). London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Yashar, D. J. (2011). The Left and Citizenship Rights. In S. Levitsky & K. M. Roberts (Eds.), *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left* (pp. 184-210). Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Zelizer, B. (2014). Memory as Foreground, Journalism as Background. In B. Zelizer & K. Tenenboim-Weinblatt (Eds.), *Journalism and Memory* (pp. 32-49). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Zelizer, B. (2008). Why memory's work on journalism does not reflect journalism's work on memory. *Memory Studies* 1(1), 79-87.
- Zelizer, B. (1995). Reading the Past against the Grain: The Shape of Memory Studies. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, June 1, 214-239.
- Zelizer, B. & Tenenboim-Weinblatt, K. (Eds.) (2014). *Journalism and Memory*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Zizek, S. (1989). *The sublime object of ideology*. London: Verso.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Últimas Noticias:

- Carrillo, J. L. (16.12.2010). "Paquete de leyes es un golpe de estado". Section: El país, p. 20.
- Pérez, O. (15.12.2010). Un mono con una hojilla. Section: Opinión, p. 56.

Correo del Orinoco:

Rosas, D. (5.7.2011). Lagente oró por la salud del Jefe del Estado. “Debemos tener fe en que se va a recuperar. Section: Impacto, p. 4.

El Universal:

Poliszuk, J. & Olivares, F. (3.7.2011). No hay relevo. Section: Política.

Párraga, M. I. (13.2.2012). Futuro... Section: Opinion.

Uzcátegui, L. J. (16.2.2012). Y se rompió el miedo. Section: Opinion.

Appendix 1: A street image from Caracas indicating the visibility of Chavismo



Signs at Chacao metro station (picture taken in June 2011)

Yellow on the left: “The revolution is full of grand feelings of love towards humanity” Ernesto “Che” Guevara (“El revolucionario está lleno de grandes sentimientos de amor a la humanidad” Ernesto “Che” Guevara).

Blue in the middle: “One cannot force happiness but one can implement societal virtues” Francisco de Miranda (“No puede hallar la felicidad, sino el que practica las virtudes sociales” Francisco de Miranda).

Red on the right: “Socialism is a path to the construction of a world of societal justice, equality and brotherhood” Hugo Chávez Frías (“El socialismo es el camino para construir un mundo de justicia social, igualdad y hermandad” Hugo Chávez Frías).

**Appendix 2: Venezuelan governmental
advertisement in Últimas Noticias
22.1.2011 & 1.2.2011**

RRH: G-23M01096-9



BICENTENARIO

23 de enero de 1958 | Triunfo popular sobre la dictadura

31 de octubre de 1958 | Las cúpulas políticas monopolizan el poder,
a través del Pacto de Punto Fijo


4 de febrero de 1992 | Rebelión por la dignidad de la Patria

2 de febrero de 1999 | Regresa el poder al Pueblo


 **¡Nunca más será traicionada
la voluntad del Pueblo!**

Febbrero
de **PASIÓN**
PATRIA


27 • feb • 1989 | El despertar de un pueblo contra
el neoliberalismo y la exclusión




4 • feb • 1992 | Rebelión por la dignidad de la Patria




2 • feb • 1999 | Regresa el poder al Pueblo



¡Nunca más será traicionada
la voluntad del Pueblo!

 Gobierno Bolivariano de Venezuela
Ministerio del Poder Popular para el Comunalismo y la Participación

 20 años
Revolución

RF: G-2665386-4

Appendix 3: Tables of content analysis

Case study 1: The people

Table 1 Quantity of articles

Section	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
Politics and national news	20 (80%)	15 (65%)	22 (85%)	23 (72%)
Economics	1 (4%)	-	-	2 (6%)
Opinion or editorial	1 (4%)	6 (26%)	3 (12%)	7 (22%)
Other	3 (12%)	2 (9%)	1 (4%)	-
TOTAL	25	23	26	32

Table 2 Size of the articles¹³⁶

Size	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
Large	15 (48%)	9 (39%)	-	7 (22%)
Medium	4 (16%)	9 (39%)	7 (27%)	18 (56%)
Small	6 (24%)	5 (22%)	19 (73%)	7 (22%)
TOTAL	25	23	26	32

Table 3 Number of images per article.

No. of images	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
No image	4	6	20	23
One picture	10	13	6	9
Several pictures	11	-	-	-
Drawing	-	2	-	-
Cover with image	6	6	1	n/a
TOTAL	31	27	27	32

¹³⁶ Large = 1 page or more, except in *Uni* where it is two printed pages or more

Medium = Larger than ¼ of the page but smaller than 1 page, in *Uni* a page or more

Small = Smaller than ¼ page, in *Uni* less than a page

Table 4 Principal actors in the analyzed articles.

Actor	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
Chávez	4 (16%)	3 (13%)	6 (23%)	8 (25%)
Chavista	11 (44%)	7 (30%)	7 (27%)	5 (16%)
Opposition	1 (4%)	6 (26%)	8 (31%)	7 (22%)
Expert	-	2 (9%)	2 (8%)	5 (16%)
Organization	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	-	-
International actors	-	-	-	2 (6%)
Citizens	4 (16%)	1 (4%)	-	1 (3%)
Other	-	-	3 (12%)	-
No actor	4 (16%)	3 (13%)	-	4 (13%)
TOTAL	25	23	26	32

Table 5 Perspective of the article

Perspective	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
There's another reason	-	5 (22%)	4 (15%)	-
AN/government handling the case	-	3 (13%)	6 (23%)	2 (6%)
Democracy/dictatorship/power	-	4 (17%)	2 (8%)	6 (19%)
Someone criticizing the law	1 (4%)	5 (22%)	2 (8%)	14 (44%)
Chávez taking action	4 (16%)	-	3 (12%)	5 (16%)
Content of the law	3 (12%)	-	2 (8%)	1 (3%)
Someone supporting the law	13 (52%)	-	-	1 (3%)
Other	4 (16%)	6 (26%)	7 (27%)	3 (9%)
TOTAL	25	23	26	32

Case study 2: Leader

Table 1 Number of articles

Section	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
Politics and national news	75 (85%)	17 (39%)	41 (79%)	49 (51%)
International	4 (5%)	-	-	1 (1%)
Economics	-	-	-	4 (4%)
Culture	1 (1%)	-	-	-
Opinion or editorial	5 (6%)	26 (59%)	11 (21%)	42 (44%)
Sports	2 (2%)	-	-	-
Other	1 (1%)	1 (2%)	-	-
TOTAL	88	44	52	96

Table 2 Size of the articles

Size	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
Large	10 (11%)	15 (34%)	-	45 (47%)
Medium	35 (40%)	22 (50%)	30 (58%)	26 (27%)
Small	43 (49%)	7 (16%)	22 (42%)	25 (26%)
TOTAL	88	44	52	96

Table 3 Number of images per article

No. images	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
No image	40	19	31	60
One picture	36	17	17	27
Several pictures	12	2	2	5
Drawing	-	2	2	4
Cover with image	3	4	4	-
TOTAL	91	44	56	96

Table 4 Principal actors

Actor	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
Chávez	8 (9%)	2 (5%)	12 (23%)	15 (16%)
AN, government or PSUV	32 (36%)	18 (41%)	15 (29%)	22 (23%)
Opposition	6 (7%)	4 (9%)	5 (10%)	10 (10%)
Expert	1 (1%)	3 (7%)	3 (6%)	4 (4%)
Foreign actor	7 (8%)	-	3 (6%)	7 (7%)
Citizens	18 (20%)	-	3 (6%)	1 (1%)
Other	14 (16%)	10 (23%)	5 (10%)	17 (18%)
No actor	2 (2%)	7 (16%)	6 (12%)	20 (21%)
TOTAL	88	44	52	96

Table 5 Perspective of the article

Perspective	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
Cancer	-	3 (7%)	7 (13%)	7 (7%)
Leadership	-	11 (25%)	2 (4%)	10 (10%)
Chávez or his return	10 (11%)	-	6 (12%)	6 (6%)
Problems of the country	-	-	3 (6%)	8 (8%)
Bicentenary	6 (7%)	5 (11%)	7 (13%)	-
Lack of information	2 (2%)	6 (14%)	3 (6%)	7 (7%)
Supporting Chávez	32 (36%)	-	5 (10%)	8 (8%)
Absence	4 (4,5%)	2 (5%)	2 (4%)	7 (7%)
Revolution	3 (3%)	-	-	-
Other	31 (35%)	17 (39%)	17 (33%)	43 (45%)
TOTAL	88	44	52	96

Case study 3: Enemy

Table 1 Number of articles

Section	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
Politics and national news	52 (69%)	37 (46%)	71 (73%)	80 (45%)
International	2 (3%)	1 (1%)	-	-
Economics	-	4 (5%)	-	1 (1%)
Culture	1 (1%)	-	-	-
Opinion or editorial	18 (24%)	33 (41%)	17 (18%)	67 (38%)
Caracas	-	-	7 (7%)	30 (17%)
Other	2 (3%)	6 (7%)	2 (2%)	-
TOTAL	75	81	97	178

Table 2 Size of the articles

Size	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
Large	9 (12%)	20 (25%)	7 (7%)	38 (21%)
Medium	39 (52%)	35 (43%)	54 (56%)	81 (46%)
Small	27 (36%)	26 (32%)	36 (37%)	59 (33%)
TOTAL	75	81	97	178

Table 3 Number of images per article (including also cartoons not analyzed)

No. of images	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
No image	38	24	50	107
One picture	34	33	34	59
Several pictures	2	9	12	7
Drawing or cartoon	6	20	1	5
Cover with image	6	3	4	n/a
TOTAL	86	89	101	178

Table 4 Principal actors

Actor	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
Opposition	39 (52%)	23 (28%)	45 (46%)	74 (42%)
Chávez	5 (7%)	6 (7%)	4 (4%)	8 (4%)
CNE	7 (9%)	1 (1%)	3 (3%)	2 (1%)
Government or	7 (9%)	3 (4%)	6 (6%)	6 (3%)
International	4 (5%)	1 (1%)	3 (3%)	7 (4%)
Expert	-	8 (10%)	6 (6%)	3 (2%)
Citizens	-	13 (16%)	9 (9%)	34 (19%)
“Us”	-	-	2 (2%)	9 (5%)
Other	10 (13%)	12 (15%)	11 (11%)	14 (8%)
No actor	3 (4%)	14 (17%)	8 (8%)	21 (12%)
TOTAL	75	81	97	178

Table 5 Perspective of the article

Perspective	CdO	TC	UN	Uni
Democracy	4 (5%)	3 (4%)	2 (2%)	12 (7%)
Participation	-	16 (20%)	4 (4%)	12 (7%)
Political change	-	7 (9%)	1 (1%)	7 (4%)
Unity	-	5 (6%)	3 (3%)	10 (6%)
Fraud	5 (7%)	2 (2%)	1 (1%)	9 (5%)
Votes	13 (17%)	8 (10%)	5 (5%)	6 (3%)
Strategy of the opposition	15 (20%)	3 (4%)	4 (4%)	17 (19%)
Organization of the elections	7 (9%)	-	-	-
Pre-elections and the results	15 (20%)	18 (22%)	38 (39%)	52 (29%)
Reactions of the Chavistas	-	9 (11%)	-	3 (2%)
Other	16 (21%)	10 (12%)	39 (40%)	50 (28%)
TOTAL	75	81	97	178

Appendix 4: Frame analysis table sample

Table 1 Correo del Orinoco's frame analysis table for case 3: Enemy

	1) Por fin aprenden (Finally they learn)	2) Codiciosos nunca cambian (The greedy ones never change)	3) Un proyecto vacío y fragmentado (Fragmented empty project)
Ejemplos (Examples¹³⁷)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crean en democracia • Los candidatos cuentan de sus propuestas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservadores, no dan entrevistas a CdO • “El Mandatario calificó la incineración de estos documentos como un hecho de corte facista.” • “Ahora la burguesía tiene su candidato, pero no solo la burguesía: los golpistas de abril tienen su candidato, el tirano Carmona tiene su candidato, los yanquis tienen su candidato, AD y COPEI tienen su candidato porque el candidato burgués es todo eso y mucho más.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Ellos tienen muy poca capacidad de convocatoria: lo han demostrado en los últimos 13 años. No tienen propuesta, no tienen proyecto, no tienen mensaje que estimule ni emocione al país.” • “Crean que la política se resuelve con esloganes”
Metaforas (Metaphors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Una gran fiesta democrática nacional” • “el CNE “hizo gala de profesionalismo...” • juego democrático • “Ya estamos montados en el autobús conducido por Capriles”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plutocracia, Capoldo • “abrazo los mas ricos de los ricos” • “metieron votos como arroz” 	
Esloganes (Slogans)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opocisión golpistas • La histórica oligarquía del dinero • Elite • Ultraderecha fascista • Fraude electoral • Burguesía 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mucha plata
Imágenes visuales (Visual images)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Los candidatos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Los políticos Chavistas hablando atrás de una mesa • Chávez 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Los candidatos al frente de gente tomando fotos de ellos • Un precandidato opositora

¹³⁷ Each frame was found to concentrate on typical elements (examples, metaphors, slogans, visual images, reasons and consequences) in the texts that were repeated in the data. In this way, the frames “rose” from the texts and formed a complete narrative as the elements were connected together in the texts.

Razones, fondo (Reasons, background)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Con participación se fortalece la democracia” • Necesitan la ayuda de CNE y FANB • Pacíficas, un grupo heterogenous pero capaz de la unidad • “Hay nuevos liderazgos en todos los partidos, no podemos meterlos a todos en un mismo saco” (se separan con los partidos viejos de AD & COPEI) • Los medios de comunicación tomaron el control de la lucha y en esta manera están intentando vulnerar la voluntad del pueblo • Capitalistas • Oposición nueva =administración vieja → Chavez a recuperado la independencia de Vnzl • Neoliberalismo • “Habla claro, burguesía. No vengas con cuenticos ahora, disfrazando tu discurso”. • Son minoría • No son unidos aunque lo dicen: “Las opciones son dos: por una parte Ramos Allup, Teodoro, Manuel Rosales y Pablo Perez; por otra el empresariado derechista venezolano, Salas Rómer y su creación Capoldo.” • “Detras de Henrique Capriles se nuclean poderosos intereses economicos privados, dentro y fuera de Venezuela...”
Consecuencias (Consequences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Los candidatos que perdieron apoyan los elegidos (unidos otra vez, respetan los resultados) • Ahora reconocieron las instituciones electorales → respetan también los resultados de las elecciones del octubre. • A ellos no importa la democracia pero si el dinero (la confusión con las primarias lo muestra) • Insignificante • “Mucha gente pensó que solo escogerían al candidato presidencial; no sabían que también debían elegir a candidatos a gobernador y alcalde.” → ni siquiera saben que estan haciendo • “uno de los grandes ganadores de las primarias fueron ciertos medios de comunicación que amasaron una “bola de cobres” a punta de publicidades a precandidatos nacionales y regionales.” • Las elecciones muestran los conflictos dentro de la oposición.
Declaración moral (Moral statements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venezuela es un país democrático porque la oposición puede tener pre-elecciones. • “un rasgo fundamental de la democracia es la alternación en el poder.” • “Nosotros estamos satisfechos de haber ido paulatinamente conquistando un espacio para que la oposición tenga una expresión democrática, y deje atras aquellos terribles días del año 2002, del golpismo, del sabotaje...” • El pueblo decide • “Como los mamelucos, su suerte dependiera de la plutocracia” • No reconocen las reglas de la democracia • No juegan justo • “No tienen moral, no tienen como ser gobierno en Venezuela”. • Odio → Lo contrario del PSUV porque acentúan conflicto

Appendix 5: Questions

Datos curriculares: Profesión y experiencia laboral

La situación en Venezuela: Como comprende la situación en general en el país?

- Como la situación en general ha cambiado durante los últimos 10-15 años respecto a la economía y política?
- Como este cambio se ha reflejado a su vida personal?
- Cuales fueron los problemas antes del Presidente Chávez?

Democracia: Que comprende usted del significado de democracia?

- Hay muchas maneras para definir democracia. Como usted comprende la democracia?
- En base a esto como usted piensa que la democracia en Venezuela ha cambiado durante los últimos 10-15 años?
- Cual es el papel de los medios de comunicación en una sociedad libre y democrática?
- Que piensa usted, cuales son las preocupaciones principales en los medios de comunicación dominantes?
- Cuales son diferencias mas grandes entre los medios de comunicaciones del estado y privados?
- Ante quien tendrían que ser responsables los medios de comunicación? Ante la gente ordinaria, el estado o los mismos?
- Está el estado controlando los medios de comunicación? Como? Por qué?
- Quienes tendrían que ser dueños de los medios de comunicación y controlarlos? Por qué?
- Cuál es el papel de Internet en una sociedad democrática?

El papel de los medios de comunicación: Como pueden los medios de comunicación atender a sus deberes y cuales son estos?

- Que piensa usted sobre la información que se da en las noticias para el pueblo en televisión, radio y los periódicos? En su opinión, que podría hacer para mejorar la calidad y cobertura (amplitud) de estas noticias?
- En su opinión, se escucha la oposición/Chavistas en los medios? Por qué (no)? Como son presentados en los medios? Que piense usted de eso?
- El caso de ley habilitante: Como los medios de comunicación distintos trataron el caso de la ley habilitante en su noticias? En su opinión, cual sería la mejor manera para tratar ese caso?
- Qué importancia tienen, en su opinión, los periódicos, radio y televisión dominantes en Venezuela por ejemplo en este caso de ley habilitante? Y los medios comunitarios e internet?
- En su opinión, que tendrían que hacer los medios en una situación similar de conflicto o tensión?

El papel de la gente:

- Cuáles son las posibilidades de la gente para participar en las actividades de los medios de comunicación?
- Es necesario para la gente tener una oportunidad para participar en las actividades de los medios de comunicación?

- Están los medios de comunicación dominantes presentando las opiniones de la gente?

El Futuro: Que pasara si Chávez sigue o no sigue como el presidente?

- Que piensa usted del futuro de Venezuela/los medios de comunicación?
- Que espera usted para el año 2012?

Appendix 6: Content analysis of the images

Table 1 Quantity of images

Image	CdO	TC
Pictures	61	14
Drawings or cartoons	2	6
TOTAL	63	20

Table 2 Cropping of the photographs

Cropping	CdO	TC
Public	10 (16%)	1 (7%)
Socially close	9 (15%)	2 (14%)
Personal distant	20 (33%)	4 (29%)
Close-up or extreme close-up	14 (23%)	6 (10%)
Object or scenery	8 (13%)	1 (7%)
TOTAL	61	14

Table 3 Actors in the photographs

Principal actor	CdO	TC
Chavista politicians	19 (31%)	5 (36%)
Chávez	11 (18%)	1 (7%)
Citizens	18 (30%)	1 (7%)
Opposition politician	1 (2%)	4 (29%)
Expert	-	2 (14%)
Other	3 (5%)	-
No actors	9 (15%)	1 (7%)
TOTAL	61	14

Appendix 7: Table of the pentadic categories

Table 1 Pentadic categories

Pentad	What do they think?	Who are they?	The role of democracy (Ideal/real life)	The role of the media (Ideal/real life)
1 The people	1) People are tired of the power play of the two parties and are becoming active 2) It is not just the change in the system, it is about changing the worldview so that it is more humane	1) State media journalists, organized citizens, citizen relations officers, community/alternative media 2) State media projects, community media/PNI (=independent national producers)	1) Participation 2) Good life	1) Truthful information; participation of the people 2) Inform; everyone should be equal in a society; information is power
			1) Getting closer to the ideal 2) Long process but going in the right direction	1) "Big" media isn't fulfilling its democratic task but promoting their own interests; Citizens have turned to other mediums 2) The old media system is changing; with control and responsibility the people may become liberated from the control of the media and start to have and produce the information they want and need
2 The media	The media has become one of the political actors and has its own political agenda	University teachers, management level workers, MsP, state media journalists, student/citizen activists	Many things (the right to choose, participation, human rights)	Inform the people and this way they will be better able to exercise their role as citizens
			Changed from representative democracy to participative democracy	The media have transformed into political actors or are even acting like political parties; they have become powerful actors
3 State	One actor is dominating in the power play and is using the media to spread its hegemony	MPs, private media, university teachers, management level, NGOs	Freedoms & civil rights and many other things	Reflect society, a great deal of information for citizens, reflecting a plurality of viewpoints
			Quality has deteriorated	Reflects its owners
4 Journalists	There is a system of domination a) Journalists are just trying to survive b) But they should try harder	Opposition media journalists, state media journalists (long career), university professors (ex journalists), management level	Free elections, the separation of power and freedom/civil rights	Transmit truthful information to the citizens, balanced information
			Quality has deteriorated	Not able to fulfill because of the economic situation, a lack of freedom of expression and political bias

Appendix 8: Values of the different actors

Table 1 Values of different actors

	State	State media	Private media	Civil society
The people	Right to live a good life versus power	1) Serving the community and revolution versus telling the objective truth 2) Serving the state	Profit and power (negative)	1) Freedom of speech and opinion and the right to be heard 2) Participation, freedom of information and the plurality of information
Media	Power, ruling, maintaining order	Government values	Journalistic values versus economic/political values	Participation, freedom of opinion, truthful information, soft and humane values
State	Power	No journalistic principals	Good journalism and cost-efficiency	Participation and a right to be heard
Journalists	Power and domination	Government values versus good journalism	Good journalistic values	Right to be heard and participation